

*John Norris*

# TREATISES

Upon

## Several Subjects :

*Viz.*

Reason and Religion, or the Grounds and Measures of Devotion.

Reflections upon the Conduct of Human Life.

The Charge of Schism continued.

Two Treatises concerning Divine Light.

Spiritual Counsel, or, The Fathers Advice to his Children.

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Written

By **JOHN NORRIS**, M.A. Rector of  
*Bemerton near Sarum.*

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L O N D O N.

Printed for **D. Manchip** at the Ship in Cornhill, and Sold by **J. Jones** at the Dolphin and Crown in St. Paul's Church yard, 1698.



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and

Worship

By JOHN WOODRIS, M.A. Rector

of St. Andrew's Church, London.

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*Reason and Religion :*  
OR, THE  
Grounds and Measures  
OF  
DEVOTION,  
Consider'd from the  
Nature of GOD,  
AND THE  
*Nature of Man,*  
In several Contemplations.  
With Exercises of Devotion applied  
to every Contemplation.

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OR, THE

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AND THE

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to every Contemplation.

---

~~TO THE HONOURABLE THE LORDS OF THE COUNCIL~~  
~~AND TO THE COMMONS OF GREAT BRITAIN~~  
To his GRACE  
*The Duke of Ormond,*  
CHANCELLOR  
OF THE  
University of Oxford.

*May it please your Grace,*

**T**IS not that I Affect the  
Patronage of great Per-  
sons, That this *Philosophical*  
piece of *Devotion* is now com-  
mended to *Tours*; but because  
I thought none so fit as your  
*Grace* to Patronize a perfor-  
mance that so well agrees both  
to the *Character* of your *Person*,

## *The Epistle Dedicatory.*

and to the *Station* whereby you stand related to us.

*Reason* and *Religion*, which make every *Page* in this Volume, as they are the two greatest Perfections of Humane Nature, so do they both conspire in your *Graces Person*, and that to such a degree as would too much employ our wonder, were they not both so *Hereditary* to your Noble Blood, as to seem rather *entailed* upon you by *descent*, than to be of your own *acquiring*.

But, besides your own Personal Eminency in these two Noble Qualifications of Mind, your *Grace* has already undertaken to be their Patron and  
Pro-

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

Protector. *Reason* and *Religion* may very fitly be inscribed as a *Motto* upon the Gates of our *University*; and every one of our Colleges is a School of *Piety*, as well as of *Philosophy*.

The accomplishment of our Intellectuals and Morals, is the peculiar designation of this Place, and our proper and almost only business in it. And in pursuance of this end, your *Grace* has been lately pleased to give *us* the *honour*, and your *self* the *trouble* of being our *Chancellor*. I could not therefore but presume, that a Person by *disposition* of Mind so much a *lover*, and by *place* so much concerned, to be a *Protector* of

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

*Learning and Piety*, would be easily inclined to countenance a performance, whose direct aim is the promotion of both. And now that your *Grace* may receive as much Benefit from the perusal of these *Meditations*, as *they* will receive Honour and Reputation from your *Graces* Favour and Protection, is all that is further desired

*By your Graces*

*most humble*

*and devoted Servant,*

J. Norris.

T O



TO THE  
READER.

There having been several Excellent things of a *Devotional Nature* Written for the Use and Benefit of *Ordinary* and *Unlearned* Persons, but little or nothing for the pious entertainment of more *refined* and *elevated* Understandings, I thought I could not employ my Pen to better purpose than in writing something of the like Kind for the use of the *Learned Reader*, who, perhaps needs as much to be assisted in his *Devotion* as the more *Ignorant*; and whose *Heart* may want as much to be *Inflamed*, as the others *Head* does to be *Instructed*.

It must be acknowledged therefore that I now write only to those of the *Learned Order*, and not to all of them neither, but only to those  
who

## To the Reader.

who are not spoil'd by their *Learning*, and whose Understandings are not *Cramp'd* by the cleaving Prejudices of *Scholastick Education*. To those who have a Genius for the *Contemplative Way*, who have *Patience* enough to pursue a long Train of thoughts, *Acuteness* enough to discern their Order and Dependence, and (which is worth all) *Indifferency* enough to use and allow *Liberty of Thinking*, and not to startle, and be affrighten'd at a *New Notion*.

By these few Hints the Reader may easily perceive both *what kind of Compositions* these are, and how I would have him come *prepared* and qualified to the Reading of them. What further concerns him to know, in reference to the Subject and Design of the Book, he may learn from the *Introduction*.

The

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The General

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The

*The Introduction.*

## I.

**T**HERE being nothing of greater consequence, to the highest Interest of Man, than the knowledge of God and himself, I thought I could not better employ my Solitude, either for my *Own* or for the *World's* Advantage, than in exercising my severest Contemplations upon these two great and important Subjects, the *Nature of God*, and the *Nature of Man*.

## II.

It must indeed be confess'd, that there is nothing whereof we have or can have so little knowledge, as of these two things; and 'tis much to be lamented that *there* should lie our greatest *Ignorance*, where we are most concern'd to *know*. But thus it is: *That* of our selves, which we are best acquainted with, is least of all our selves: And the *unknown* part of this little World is much greater than the *known*. We know but little of our *Bodies*, but infinitely less of our *Souls*. God has not given us any *Idea* of the latter, and whatever we can borrow from our *Senses* will never be able to supply that defect. For there is a greater distance and disproportion between an *Immaterial* substance and a *Sensible*, than between one sensible and another. But now the understanding the nature of one sensible will not suffice to make us understand the nature of another. For a Man born Blind will never from his understanding of *Sounds* come to understand

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*Colours.* Much less therefore will our understanding of *Sensible* things help us to understand the nature of *Immaterial Substances*.

## III.

And if not of *Immaterial substances* in *general*, much less will it serve us to understand the *Essence* of the *great God*, which infinitely transcends all other *Immaterial substances*. The *Idea of God* is least capable of all *Spiritual Beings*, to be form'd out of *sensible phantasms*. For I consider that by how much the more our *Mind* is rais'd to the *Contemplation of Spiritual things*, by so much the more we always *abstract* from *sensibles*. But now the *highest* and *last* term of *Contemplation* is, the *Divine Essence*. Whence it follows necessarily, that the *Mind* which sees the *Divine Essence*, must be *totally* and *thoroughly* absolv'd from all commerce with the *Corporeal Senses*, either by *Death*, or some *extatical* and *rapturous Abstraction*. So true is that which *God* said to *Moses*, *Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me, and live*, *Exod. 33. 20.*

## IV.

So far therefore are we from deriving any *Idea of God* from our *Senses*, that they are our greatest *Impediment* in *Divine Contemplations*. So great, that we cannot any other way *clearly* apprehend the *Essence of God* while we are lodg'd in the *Prison of our Senses*. *God* cannot give us a distinct view of himself, while we hold any commerce with our *Senses*. For he that knows exactly what proportion our present condition bears to his own *Divine Glories*, has told us, That no *Man* shall *see him*, and *live*. We must therefore forever despair of conceiving the *Divine Essence*  
clearly

clearly and distinctly, not only from our Senses, but even with them.

## V.

Not that there is any darkness or obscurity in God. No, God is the most knowable Object in himself. For he is the *First Being*, and therefore the *First Truth*, and therefore the *First Intelligible*, and consequently the *most Intelligible*. One Apostle says that he *dwells in light*; and another, that he *is light*, and that there is no darkness at all in him. God therefore consider'd in his own Nature is as well the most *Intelligible*, as the most *Intelligent Being* in the World.

Tim. 6. 16.

John 1. 9.

## VI.

The difficulty therefore arises not from the obscurity of the Object, but from the disproportion of the Faculty. For our Understandings stand affected to the most manifest Objects, as the Eye of a Bat to the light of the Sun, as the Philosopher observes in his *Metaphysics*. God dwells in light, as the Apostle says, but then 'tis such as no Man can approach unto; *ὅς ἐστιν ἀνεγείσιν*, he inhabits unapproachable light, or a light which cannot be come at, not for its distance ( for he is not far from every one of us ) but for its brightness. The very Angels are forc'd to veil their faces when they see it; but for Mortals, they cannot so much as come nigh it. The short is, God is too intelligible to be here clearly understood by an Imbody'd Understanding; and too great a Light hinders vision, as much as Darknefs.

Tim. 6. 16.

A. 17. 27.

## VII.

But tho' we cannot here have a clear and distinct knowledge either of God or our Selves, yet we may know so much of both as may serve the

ends of *Piety* and *Devotion*. We may by attending to that general Idea of God, which is by himself imprinted on our Minds, learn to unfold many of the Perfections of his Glorious and Invisible Essence; and tho' we cannot see his *face* and live, yet his *back-parts* ( we know ) were once seen by a Mortal capacity, and so may be again. And for *our selves*, tho' God has not given us any *Idea* of our own Souls, yet the powers and operations, the condition, circumstances, and accidents of our Nature, are things that may fall within the Sphere of Human consideration. And from both these we may derive Measures for our due behaviour towards the Great God. And this is the design of the present Contemplations, *viz.* to consider so much of the nature of God, and the nature of Man, as may afford sufficient Grounds and Measures for true *Piety* and *Devotion*.

## VIII.

By *Devotion* here I do not meerly understand that special disposition or act of the Soul, whereby we warmly and passionately address our selves to God in Prayer, ( which is what is commonly meant by *Devotion* ) but I use the word in a greater Latitude, so as to comprehend under it *Faith*, *Hope*, *Love*, *Fear*, *Trust*, *Humility*, *Submission*, *Honour*, *Reverence*, *Adoration*, *Thanksgiving*, in a word, all that Duty which we owe to God. Nor by this acceptation do I stretch the word beyond what either from its rise it *may*, or by frequent use among the Learned it *does* signify. *Devotion* is a *devovendo*, from *devoting*, or giving up ones self wholly to the Service of another. And accordingly those among the *Heathens* who deliver'd and consign'd themselves up to Death, for the safety of their

Coun-



Country, were called *Devoti*. And so in like manner for a Man to give up himself wholly and intirely to the Service of God, and actually to demean himself towards him in the conduct of his life, as becomes a Creature towards his Creator, is Devotion. And in this Latitude the word is used by *Aquinas*, who defines Devotion to be, *A will readily to give up ones self to all those things which belong to the Service of God.*

22 de Q.  
82. A. 1.

## IX.

This is what I here understand by Devotion, and of which I intend in the following Contemplations to assign the Grounds and Measures from the *Nature of God*, and the *Nature of Man*. But before I proceed to inforce and direct Devotion from these two particular Subjects of Contemplation, I think it not improper to consider a little by way of preparation, how much Contemplation or Meditation in general contributes to the advantage of Devotion.

## X.

They that make *Ignorance* the *Mother of Devotion*, cannot suppose Contemplation any great friend to it. For the more a Man Contemplates, the more he will know, and the wiser he grows, the less apt upon their supposition he will be for Devotion. But I would ask the Men of *this fancy* this one Question. Is Devotion a Rational thing, or is it not? If not, why then do they recommend Ignorance or any thing else in order to it? For it may as well, nay, better, be let alone. But if it be a Rational thing, then they must either say, that the more a Man considers, the less he will discover the Reasons of it; or that the more he discovers the Reasons of it, the less he will be

perswaded to the practice of it. Both which Propositions are absurd and ridiculous enough to be *laught* at, but too ridiculous to be *seriously refused*.

## XI.

But to shew how much Contemplation serves to the advantage of Devotion, we need only consider, that Devotion is an act of the Will, that the Object of the Will is good apparent, or good understood, and consequently that every act of the Will is influenc'd and regulated by *consideration*, Devotion therefore is as much influenc'd by consideration as any other act of the Will is: And therefore I cannot but admire at the Disposers of the Angelical Hierarchies, for making the *Seraphim* excel in *Love* and *Devotion*, and the *Cherubim* in *Knowledge*. As if Knowledge were not the best preparative for Devotion.

## XII.

I deny not but that *Knowledge* and *Devotion* often go asunder, and the *Wiseest* are not always the *Devoutest*. But then this is not owing to the natural and direct influence of Knowledge, but comes to pass only occasionally and accidentally, by reason of some other impediment: Suppose Pride, Lust, Covetousness, or some such indisposition of Mind, which is of more force and prevalency to *lett* our Devotion, than Knowledge is to *further* it. And then no wonder that the heavier Scale weighs down. But still Knowledge has a *natural* aptness to excite Devotion, and will infallibly do it if not hinder'd by some other cause. So that we may take this for a never-failing Rule, That all other things being equal, the more knowing and considering, still the more Devout. And in this sense also that of the *Psalmist* will be verifi'd, *while I was musing the fire kindled.* The

*The great God so enlighten my Mind, and so govern my Pen, that by these my Meditations I may illustrate his ineffable Excellence, and kindle holy flames of Devotion, both in my Self, and in my Reader. To him therefore I pray in the words of Moses, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. Amen.*

---

## Contemplation I.

*Of the general Idea of God.*

### I.

**G**OD never at any time discover'd so much of himself in so few words, as when he said to *Moses*, enquiring by what *Name* he should stile him, to make him known to the Children of *Israel*, *Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you,* אֲנִי אֲנִי אֲנִי *i. e.* not as we render it in *English*, *I am that I am*, but, *I am that am*, or, *I am he that am*. And so the *Seventy* read it, Ἐγὼ εἰμι ὁ ὢν, *I am he that is*.

### II.

This is the Sacred and Incommunicable Name of the Great God, that which contains in it *παν τὸ πλήρωμα τῆς θεότητος*, all the Fulness of the Godhead, all the Treasures of the Divinity. By this Name he is distinguish'd not only from false Gods, but from all other Beings whatsoever. *I am he that am*, says God, implying that he is after some very Eminent and Peculiar Manner, and that nothing else besides him truly is. This therefore denotes the great Eminence and Peculiarity

both of the *Essence* and of the *Existence* of God. Here therefore I shall take my ground, and shall hence deduce and unfold; 1. The general Idea or Notion of God. 2ly. Some of those chief Excellencies and Perfections of his which may have a more strong and immediate Influence upon our *Piety* and *Devotion*.

## III.

In the present Contemplation I am concern'd for no more than only to fix the general Idea or Notion of God. This is of extraordinary moment to the clearness and distinctness of our following Contemplations; for unless we take the right *thred* at first, the whole progress will be nothing else but *error* and *confusion*.

## IV.

Now as to the general Idea or first Conception of God, this has been Universally understood to be, that he is a *Being absolutely perfect*. This I say has been made the general Notion of God in all the *Metaphysics* and *Divinity* that I have yet seen. And particularly it has been imbraced by two Authors of extraordinary Speculation, *Cartesius* and Dr. *More*, whose Authority in this matter claims a peculiar deference, because they are Men that Philosophize with a free and *unaddicted* Genius, and write not as they *read*, but as they *think*.

## V.

This Opinion, because embraced by *many*, and some of them *great* Patrons, I once took for a Theorem of unquestionable Truth. But upon a more narrow inspection, I find it necessary to dissent from it, tho' it be call'd *singularity* to do so. For however plausible it may at first view appear, I think there is no less an *Objection* than plain *Demonstration*

monstration against it. Which I make out upon these grounds.

## VI.

First I consider that the Idea of a thing is that formal conception or inward word of the Mind, which expresses or represents the Essence or Nature of a thing. Then again, by the Essence of a thing, is meant that which *ought* to be first conceiv'd in a thing, and to which all other things are understood as superadded. I say, which *ought* to be first conceiv'd, because in fixing the Essence of a thing, not the *arbitrary* or *accidental*, but the *natural* order of Conception to is be attended to. Whence it follows, that the Idea of a thing is that which expresses that which is *first* of a thing in order of conception.

## VII.

This being granted, it does hence evidently follow, That that which is not first to be conceiv'd in the nature of a thing, but supposes somewhat there before it in order of conception, cannot be the Idea of that thing, tho' it be never so necessarily and inseparably joyn'd with it. For if it were, then something would be the Idea of a thing, which is not first in order of conception; which is against the definition of such an Idea.

## VIII.

For, to illustrate this by an example, Who will say that the *Idea* of a *Triangle* consists in this, that any two of its sides, taken together, are greater than the third remaining? This is, indeed, a necessary *affection* of a triangle, but it must by no means be allow'd to be its *Idea*, because 'tis not what we first conceive in it, that being this, *viz.* *that which is comprehended by three right Lines:*  
Which

Which being the first thing conceiv'd, is therefore the true Idea of a Triangle.

## IX.

Now that to be a Being absolutely perfect, is not the *first conceivable* in God, but supposes something before it in the Divine Nature, is plain from hence, because it may be proved *a priori*, or by way of a *causal dependence* from something in the same Divine Nature. That it may be thus proved I shall make appear in my second Contemplation, where I shall make it my profess business actually to prove it. At present I *suppose* it, and upon that supposition do, I think, rightly conclude, that *to be a Being absolutely perfect*, cannot be properly the Idea of God. For the *Consequence* of my Argument will, I suppose, be acknowledg'd by all, the only difficulty is concerning the *Proposition* it self: But the Proof of this I reserve to the next Contemplation.

## X.

If it be in the mean time objected, That to be a Being absolutely Perfect, is involv'd in the Notion of God; and that 'tis an Idea that can belong to no other Being, and that therefore it must be the Idea of God. To this I answer, 1. That a thing may be involv'd in the Notion of a thing either *Formally* and *Explicitly*, or else *Virtually* and *Implicitly*. Whatever is involv'd Formally and Explicitly in any Idea, is Essential to that Idea. But not what is involv'd only virtually and implicitly. Thus 'tis virtually and implicitly involv'd in the Idea of a Triangle, that it has three Angles equal to two Right ones, and yet we don't therefore make this the Idea of a Triangle, because 'tis not there *Formally* and *Explicitly*,  
but

but only *Virtually* and *Potentially*. But now to be a Being absolutely perfect is not involv'd in the Notion of God *Formally* and *Explicitly*, but only *Virtually* and *Potentially* ( as will appear in the next Contemplation ) and consequently 'tis hence more rightly concluded, that the Idea of God does not consist in this, that he is a Being Absolutely Perfect,

## XI.

To the second part of the Objection I answer, that 'tis not enough to make a thing the Idea of a thing, because it can belong to no other Being. For then to be *Circumscriptively* in a place must be the Idea of a *Body*, and to be *Risible* must be the Idea of a *Man*, for these are supposed to belong to no other Beings. No, the most that ought to be concluded hence, is, that such things are *strict properties*, such as immediately and necessarily flow from the Essence of the subject; not that they are the very Essence it self. When therefore 'tis said that to be a Being absolutely perfect can belong to no other but God, all that may be hence concluded is, that 'tis an *Essential*, and consequently *Incommunicable Property* of God to be a Being absolutely perfect, but not that therein the *Idea* of God does consist.

## XII.

If then this be not the Idea of God, wherein shall we fix it? It must be in something which we first conceive in God, and which is the Basis and Foundation of whatever we ascribe to him, whatever we think or say of him. It must be in something that in some measure expresses and represents his Essence. And where shall we look for this but in his *Name*, that *great Name* whereby he

re-



reveal'd himself to *Moses*, and whereby *Moses* was to make him known to his *own People*, who were then ignorant of him? In this *Name* of God I suppose his *Essence* and *Idea* to be couch'd.

## XIII.

Here therefore I find my self engaged in these two considerations. First, Why the *Idea* of God should be lodg'd in his *Name*. Secondly, What this *Idea* of God is, which is there lodg'd. That the *Idea* of God is lodg'd in his *Name*, I am induced to believe upon these grounds. First, Because I think it highly reasonable to suppose in general, That whenever *God* gives a *name* to any thing, 'tis such as expresses its *nature*. Not that words signify *naturally*, but that *God* makes choice of such a word whose signification naturally expresses the thing, tho' 'twas thro' *Arbitrary* institution that it *first* came by such a signification. In this sense, I say, 'tis highly reasonable to believe, that *God* always names things according to their *natures*. For is it consistent with the Accuracy of Infinite Wisdom to *mis-call* any thing? No, as he knows the *number* of things, so he is as well skill'd in their *natures*. And therefore, says the *Psalmist*.  
 Psal. 147. He telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names, That is, by such significant names as express their several *Powers* and *Influences*.

## XIV.

Secondly, I consider, That as 'tis highly decorous and reasonable in general, that *God* should call things by such names as express their *natures* so there is here a particular reason why he should express his *own Essence* in this his name. For thus stood the case: The Children of *Israel* had been now a long while conversant among the *Egyptians*, who

who were the greatest *Idolaters* and *Polytheists* in the World, there they had been used to variety of Gods, who were also call'd by variety of names. Hereupon, says *Moses* to God, *Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, the God of your Fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his Name? What shall I say unto them?* Implying that it was necessary (as indeed it was) that God should notify himself by such a Name, as would distinguish him from all the Gods of the *Heathen*, that is, by a *Proper* and *Essential* Name. Whereupon, says God to *Moses*, *I am that am. Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I am hath sent me unto you.*

## XV.

It being therefore concluded, that the Idea of God must be lodg'd in this his Name; let us now consider what this Idea of God is which is there lodg'd. And for this we must attend in the first place to the true sense and signification of this Name of God, *I am that am*, or, *I am*. Now this can signifie no other, but *Being it self*, or *Universal Being*, or *Being in General*, *Being in the Abstract*, without any restriction or limitation. As if God had said, You enquire who I am, and by what Name I would be distinguish'd. Know then, that, *I am he that am, I am Being it self*. This therefore must express the *Essence*, and consequently this must be the *Formal Conception* and *Idea* of God.

## XVI.

But this must be further explain'd, before it be further confirm'd. In order to which, I consider, that as, in every particular order or kind of Being there is a *Universal Nature*, under which all singulars are comprehended, and whereof they

all

all partake : As for instance, there is the Nature or Essence of a Circle or Triangle in common as well as this or that particular Circle or Triangle. So in Beings consider'd as Beings, there is Being in general, Universal Being, Being it self, or the Essence of Being, as well as this or that Being in particular.

## XVII.

\*Vid. Collection of  
Miscellaneous.

Again I consider, that all other Universal Abstract Essences are really distinct from, and exist out of those singulars whose Essences they are. This must of necessity be allow'd, whatever the *Peripateticks* remonstrate to the contrary. Things must exist in *Idea* before they do in *Nature*, otherwise 'twill be impossible to give an intelligible account of the *stability* of *Science*, and of Propositions of *Eternal Truth*. But this I have already demonstrated in my \* *Metaphysical Essay*, and shall have an occasion further to discourse of it when I come to treat of the *Omniscience* of God. Hence therefore supposing it, I say, That as all other Universals or Abstract Essences are really distinct from, and exist out of those Singulars whose Essences they are ; so in like manner there is Being it self, or the Essence of Being, really distinct and separately existing from all particular Being.

## XVIII.

Met. Essay.

And now that the Essence and *Idea* of God do consist in this *Being it self*, or this *Essence of Being* will be further confirm'd from this Consideration That as all other Universal Natures or Essences are nothing else ( as I have already elsewhere and shall hereafter again prove ) but the Intellect of God, which as variously imitable, or participable, exhibits all the general Orders and Nature

tures of things; so this Being it self, or this Essence of Being, what can it be else, but the very Essence of God, containing in it the whole Plenitude and Possibility of being, all that is, or can be?

## XIX.

And that this is the true Idea and Essence of God, to be Being it self, is further plain, because 'tis the first conceivable in God. For the proof of this, That it is the first conceivable in God, I might appeal to experience. For, let any Contemplative Person try whether this be not the first thing he conceives when he hears the Name of God. But I demonstrate it thus. The first thing which is conceivable in God, must be the first thing that can absolutely be conceiv'd. But Being it self is the first thing that can absolutely be conceiv'd. Therefore Being it self is the first thing which is conceivable in God.

## XX.

The Assumption I suppose, will pass unquestion'd with all. For what can we possibly conceive before Being it self? The Proposition I prove thus. God is the *first*; or, there is nothing before God. And therefore the first thing which is conceivable in God, must be the first thing that can *absolutely* be conceiv'd. Otherwise there would be something before God, which is against the supposition. The conclusion therefore follows, That Being it self is the first thing which is conceivable in God; and consequently, that the true Idea of God, is Being it self; which was the thing to be proved.

*The Use of this to Devotion.*

**I**F then God be *Being it self*, there is Infinite reason why we should Love, Fear, Reverence and Adore

Adore him. For what an *enlarged, indeterminate, transcendental, universaliz'd* thing is Being it self! There is a vast Amplitude in the degrees of *particular* Beings, and inconceivable almost is the disproportion between an Intelligence of the highest order, and a piece of *dead impoverish'd* Matter. But what is this to the disproportion between the highest *particular* Being, nay all the particular Beings that are or can be, and *Being it self*? This is that which *truly is*, all other things are but *shadows and phantasms*. Being it self is its own Basis and Foundation, the great *contrariety to nothing*, the steady and inmost support and establishment of all things that *have Being*, and the fountain of all that *can be*. 'Tis an Ocean without a Shore, a Depth without a Bottom. In short, 'tis such an *immense Amplitude* as a Man cannot duly think of without the profoundest impressions of awe and reverence, humility, and self-annihilation, love and wonder, fear and great joy.

### *The Aspiration.*

O Thou whose Name is *Jehovah*, who art the very Essence of Being, who art Being it self, how can I ever sufficiently love, fear, reverence and Adore thee! Thou art above all the Affections of my *Heart*, all the motions of my *Will*, yea and all the conceptions of my *Understanding*; No sooner do I begin to think of thee, but I am plunged beyond my depth; my thoughts are all swallow'd up and overwhelm'd in their first Approach to thy Essence, and I shall sooner lose my self than find thee.

O *dreadful Excellence*, I tremble to think of thy  
Essence;

Essence; my Soul turns her self from thee, She cannot look forward, She pants, She burns, She languishes, is beaten back with the light of thy Glories, and returns to the familiarity of her own *Darkness*, not because She *chuses* it, but because She is *Weary*.

O Sovereign greatness, how am I *impoverish'd*, how am I *contracted*, how am I *annihilated* in thy Presence! Thou only art, I am not, Thou art all, I am nothing. But 'tis well, O my God, that I am nothing, so thou art all; 'tis well I am not in my self, so I am in thee.

O *Being it self*, 'tis in thee that I *live, move, and have my being*. Out of thee I *am* nothing, I *have* nothing, I can *do* nothing. I am but little and inconsiderable *with* thee, and what then should I be *without* thee? To thee therefore I devote and dedicate my whole self, for I am wholly thine. I will ever live *to* thee, since I must ever live *in* thee, And oh let my Beloved be ever *Mine*, as I *am*; and ever *will* be *His*. Amen.

## Contemplation II.

*That God is a Being absolutely Perfect, proved from the Preceding general Idea of God.*

### I.

FROM the Essences of things flow all their Attributes and Perfections. Having therefore in the preceding Contemplation fix'd the Essence and Idea of God in Being it self, I shall now in the

first place hence deduce that he is a *Being* absolutely perfect. This has been hitherto taken for the very formal conception and Idea of God, and accordingly has been made the ultimate ground and foundation to prove all his other Perfections, but has rather been *supposed* than *proved* it self. But now I make this the *first general Attribute* of God, to be a Being absolutely Perfect. The proof and deduction of which, from his Idea, is the concern of the present Contemplation.

## II.

Let us therefore reassume the Idea of God, which if we attend to, we shall discern that absolute perfection is virtually involv'd in it, and consequently that God is a Being absolutely perfect. The Idea of God, as we have shewn, is Being it self. Now I consider in the first place that Being it self contains in it *all the degrees* of Being, and consequently *all possible Perfection*. The Argument in form runs thus. Whatever has all the degrees of Being, has all Perfection.

But Being it self has all the degrees of Being.  
Therefore Being it self has all Perfection.

## III.

The proof of the first Proposition will depend upon this, that *Perfection* is nothing else but *degree of Being*. If this be once made out, then it plainly follows that whatever has all the degrees of Being has all Perfection. Now to prove that Perfection is nothing else but degree of Being, I consider first that all Perfection is by *Addition*. For the more perfect any thing is, the more it has. But now all Addition is by the Accession of something that *really is*. For *nothing*, tho' never so often repeated, will add nothing. And therefore Perfection is nothing else but a further degree of Being. IV.



## IV.

This I confirm by considering further that every thing is perfect just so far as it *is*, and according to the mode of Being, so is the mode of perfection. Thus Vertue is no otherwise the perfection of a Man than as he *is* vertuous, nor strength than he *is* strong. And so in all other instances according as any thing *is*, so is its Perfection. And so on the contrary, all imperfection is want of being, and every thing is just so far imperfect as it *is not*, some way or other. Now if every thing be so far perfect or imperfect respectively as it either *is*, or *is not*, then it clearly follows that perfection it self is nothing else but degree of Being.

## V.

Again I consider, that 'tis impossible that perfection should be any thing else but degree of being. For there is nothing in the World but *Being*. If therefore one thing be more perfect than another, it must be, it can be for no other reason but because it has more degrees of Being, there not being any thing else whereby it may exceed. For I think the case is here as in *Numbers*. One number exceeds another not by any vertue or quality of another kind, but only by the *multiplication* of the *same units*. And so one Being exceeds, or is more perfect than another, not by any thing which is not *Being*, but *only* by having more *units* or *degrees* of *Being*. Bare, meer Being is as 'twere an *unit*, the lowest perfection; and the only way to make it more perfect is *multiplication*, by adding to it more of the same units. And consequently perfection is nothing else but degree of Being.

## VI.

This Proposition being sufficiently clear'd, that

Perfection is nothing else but a Degree of Being, and consequently the other, that whatever has all the degrees of Being has all Perfection; let us now consider whether Being it self has all the Degrees of Being. That it has so, will thus appear: Being it self is *indeterminate* in being, and consequently has all the degrees of Being. The Argument reduced to Form is this: Whatever is indeterminate in being has all the Degrees of Being.

But Being it self is indeterminate in being: Therefore Being it self has all the degrees of Being.

## VII.

And first, that whatever is indeterminate in Being has all the degrees of Being is certain, for the whole Power and Plenitude of Being can be but indeterminate or infinite, there is nothing beyond that, and therefore that which is indeterminate in Being, is adequate to the whole Power and Plenitude of Being; and consequently has all the Degrees of Being.

## VIII.

And now that Being it self is indeterminate in being is as certain. For what should bound it? Nothing can be bounded but by something that is *before* it: Which I thus demonstrate. To bound or limit a thing is to give it such a definite Portion of Being and no more. Now to give such a definite portion of Being and no more, implies giving of Being *Simply*, and that is the same as to be a *Cause*, and every Cause is before the effect, and consequently nothing can be bounded but by something that is before it. But now what is before Being it self? Being it self is the first thing that

that can be conceiv'd: And therefore as that which is First in any kind, cannot be bounded by any thing in *that* kind, so Being it self, which is *Absolutely First*, cannot be bounded by any thing at all, because 'tis before all things. Indeed this or that particular Being may well be bounded, because it partakes so much and no more of Being it self, or the Essence of Being. But Being it self having nothing before it from whence it might receive limits, must of necessity be unlimited in being, and consequently have all the Degrees of Being.

## IX.

And that Being it self has all the Degrees of Being, I further deduce from this Consideration; All Absolute and Universal Natures or Essences, have all the Perfection of their respective Orders and kinds. And it cannot be otherwise, since they are *abstracted* from particular Subjects, whose deficiency in *receiving* is the ground of all that defect and imperfection which is in all *Concrete* Entities. Thus this or that particular Musical Composition, or this or that particular Vertuous Man, are of a limited excellence, because they partake of Harmony and Vertue to such a certain Measure. But now suppose Harmony it self, or Vertue it self, should exist Separately in the very *Essence*, they would necessarily have all the possible degrees of *Harmony* and *Vertue*. And accordingly 'tis as reasonable to conclude that Being it self has all the degrees of Being. Whence it follows, that Being it self has all Perfection, and consequently that God, who is Being it self, is *Absolutely perfect*.

Now if to this it be Objected, That those things which *only are*, are the most imperfect, and that therefore Being it self is most imperfect; and that therefore if God be Being it self, he will be so far from being Absolutely Perfect, that he will be the most imperfect Being of any. I answer, That if those things which only are, were therefore imperfect because of the imperfection of *Being Absolutely*, as the Objection supposes, the Consequence would then be as is objected. But they are therefore only imperfect, because they partake of Absolute Being, according to its most imperfect degree, which is *only to exist*. They are not therefore imperfect as they are, but as they are *not*. As they are they are *Perfect*, for to be is to be so far Perfect, and to be *Absolutely* is to be Absolutely Perfect. God therefore who Absolutely *is*, is Absolutely Perfect.

## XI.

The same Conclusion I further demonstrate by this Order or Reasoning: That must needs be Absolutely Perfect which has no imperfection: All imperfection is want of Being, and therefore that must needs have no imperfection which is utterly removed from not being, and that must needs be utterly removed from not being which has all Being, and that must needs have all Being, which is Being it self; and therefore that which is Being it self must needs be absolutely Perfect; God therefore who is Being it self, is also an absolutely Perfect Being. Which was the Proposition to be proved.

*The Use of this to Devotion.*

**I**F then Perfection be only degree of Being, and if God be Infinite in Being because Being it self, and consequently has all the degrees of Being, and consequently all Perfections, it will hence follow, that we own and acknowledge this absolute Perfection of his by a suitable exercise of all our Powers and Faculties. For this is but strict Justice. And that therefore we contemplate his Superlative Excellence with the deepest Awe, Reverence, and Admiration; that we love and desire him with the full bent and spring of our Souls; that we fix and concenter upon him all our Passions and Affections; that we make him our end and center, the center of our desires, and the end of our actions; that we despise our selves and the whole Creation in comparison of him; and that lastly we so study to please this absolutely Perfect Being, that we may at last be admitted to the glorious Communications of his Infinite Perfections.

*The Aspiration.*

**M***Y Lord and my God*, with what awful apprehensions do I contemplate thy Perfections! How am I struck, dazled, and confounded with the light of thy Glories! Thy Being standeth like the *strong Mountains*, and thy Perfections are like the *great Deep*. How can I think of thee without wonder and astonishment, and how can I think of any thing else but thee!

O thou Circle of Excellency, thou endless Orb of Perfection, where shall I begin to love thee? Thou art altogether Lovely; oh that I were also altogether Love! My God, I desire nothing but to love thee, and to be loved by thee. *Thou art all Fair, my Love, there is no spot in thee. My beloved is Light, and in him is no Darknes at all; Let him therefore kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for his love is better than wine.*

My great God, how do I despise my self and the whole Creation when I once think upon thee! Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and there is none upon Earth that I desire in comparison of thee. Thou alone dost so fill my Thoughts, so ravish my Affections, that I can contemplate nothing but thee, I can admire nothing but thee, and I can love nothing but thee. Nor do I think my Soul straitned in being confined to thee, for thou, O my God art All.

Psal. 63.

O my God, I have lookt for thee in holiness, that I might behold this thy power and thy glory. I can now see it but in a Glass darkly, but thou hast told us that those who are pure in heart shall hereafter see thee face to face. Grant therefore I may so love, fear and serve thee here, that I may behold thee, and enjoy thee, as thou art in thy Infinite Spirit, for ever hereafter. Amen.

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### Contemplation III.

*That therefore all the Perfections of particular Beings exist in God, and that after a more excellent manner than they do in particular Beings themselves.*

**I**N the preceding Contemplations it has been shewn, that the Essence and Idea of God consists in Being it self, and that therefore God is a Being absolutely Perfect. I now further consider, that from the same ground it may be concluded, that, all the Perfections of particular Beings exist in God, and that after a more excellent manner than they do in particular Beings themselves. And first, that all the Perfections of particular Beings do exist in God.

#### II.

This I collect thus from the Idea of God. If Being it self be therefore absolutely Perfect because it has all the degrees of Being, as has been proved, then by the same proportion it plainly follows, that if Being it self has all the degrees of Being that are in all particular Beings, it must have all the Perfection that is in all particular Beings. This consequence I say is undeniable, because Perfection is nothing else but degree of Being. And that Being it self has all the degrees of Being that are in all particular Beings, might be sufficiently concluded from this, That it has  
all



all the degrees of Being Simply and Absolutely; which was proved before. But I further infer it thus :

## III.

Being it self is the cause of all particular Beings, for all particular Beings are what they are by partaking of Being it self: and if Being it self be the cause of all particular Beings, then it must be also the cause of all the degrees of Being that are in particular Beings, for these can no more rise up into act from themselves, than the particular Beings themselves can. And if Being it self be the cause of all the degrees of Being that are in particular Beings, then it must have in it self all those degrees; for nothing can communicate what it has not. The short is, Whatever is in the effect must pre-exist some way or other in *that* cause upon which it *wholly depends*. But now if Being it self be the cause of all the degrees of Being that are in particular Beings, then particular Beings *wholly depend* upon Being it self; and consequently whatever Perfection is in particular Beings, must exist in Being it self, which was the first Proposition to be proved.

## IV.

The next is, That the Perfections of particular Beings do exist in God after a more excellent manner than they do in the particular Beings themselves. For the Prerogative of God above his Creatures does not consist merely in this, That there are more Perfections in God than he ever *did*, or *will*, or *can* communicate to his Creatures; but that he has also those very Perfections which they have in a more eminent manner.

There is indeed a great deal of Perfection and Beauty in the World, enough to affect the *Curious* with the greatest *Pleasure*, and the *Religious* with the greatest *Devotion*. And therefore St. *Austin* discoursing upon that place of St. *Paul* to the *Romans*, where the *Gentiles* are said to know God, but yet not to glorifie him as God; *Whence could they know him?* says he, *From the things which he has made?* For do but ask the Beauty of the *Sea*, ask the Beauty of the dilated and diffused *Air*, ask the Beauty of the *Heavens*, ask the Order of the *Stars*, ask the *Sun* clarifying the *Day* with his Brightness, ask the *Moon* tempering the darkness of the following *Night* with her Splendor, ask the *Animals* which move in the *Waters*, on the *Earth*, and in the *Air*. The *Souls* which lie hid, the *Bodies* that are perspicuous, the visible things that are to be govern'd, and the invisible *Governours*; Ask all these, they will all of them give Answer, Behold, look upon us, we are Fair. Their Beauty is their Confession. Who made these *Mutable Fairs*, but the *Immutable Fair*? But he that would be more sensibly affected with the Beauty of the Universe, let him consult that excellent Draught which the *Roman Orator* has given of it, which I take to be as fine a *Description* as ever was made, either by *his* or any other Pen.

Serm. 149.

De Nat.  
Deorum.  
Lib. 2,

## VI.

And 'tis highly reasonable, that there should be a great deal of Beauty in the Creation, since the World was made by him who is Being it self, and consequently Beauty it self, and who must needs imprint his own likeness upon the things which he has made. For if God must have all the

the

the Perfections which are in the Creature, the God can communicate no other Perfections to the Creature than what he has himself, (he himself having all) and consequently the Creature must partake of the likeness of God. And therefore it may be said, That God made not only Man, but the whole World, in a larger sense, after his own Image: And as Art imitates Nature, so Nature imitates God. The short is, if God has *All* of the Creature, then the Creature must have *something* of God, and therefore must in some degree resemble him. And says *Plato* in his *Timæus*, πάντα ὅτι μάλιστα ἐβούλετο γίνεσθαι παρὰ πλῆσι αὐτοῦ. *He would have all things come as nigh himself as might be.* And to the same effect *Aquinas*, *Res omnes create sunt quædam Imagines primi Agentis*; *All created things are certain Images of the first Agent.*

Lib. 3. Con.  
Gen. c. 19.

## VII.

But tho' Nature imitates God, yet it happens here, as in most other imitations, the *Extrac* comes far short of the *Original*. God does not only excell the Creatures in having degrees of Being, which he will not, cannot communicate to them, but also in having their Perfections in a more excellent manner than they have themselves. Thus that Beauty which charms the Eyes of the Amorous, exists more excellently in God than in the sweetest Face which they admire. And that Harmony which dissolves the Soul into Raptures and Extasies, has a much more perfect Existence in God than in the most agreeable Sounds that can possibly conspire together. The Creature is very unlike God, even where it resembles him, and accordingly the Scripture

some-

sometimes makes mention of a likeness that is between God and his Creatures, as when it says, *Let us make man after our own likeness.* Again at Gen. 1. another time it utterly disowns it, as when it says, *To whom then will ye liken God, or what likeness will ye compare unto him?* *Isai. 40. 18.*

## VIII.

And that things should thus fall short of God, even in that very respect wherein they resemble him, is no more than what Reason will conclude necessary. For God being the very Essence of Being, or Being it self, and therefore indeterminate in Being, and therefore also in Perfection, it follows that he has not only all Kinds of Perfection, but that every Kind of Perfection, which he has must needs be as excellent as is possible in that Kind. Thus for instance, The Beauty that is in God must be as perfect as 'tis possible for *Beauty to be*, and so the Harmony that is in God must be as perfect as 'tis possible for *Harmony to be*. That is in other words, the Beauty which is in God must be *Beauty it self*, and the Harmony which is in God must be *Harmony it self*.

## IX.

But now 'tis impossible that things should exist in the Creature after such a rate as this. As they are not Being it self, but Particular Beings, so every Perfection that is in them is not that *Perfection it self*, in the *Abstract*, but only *Particular, Derivative and Concrete*. They are Beautiful and Harmonical, but not Beauty it self, nor Harmony it self. *Beauty it self* can no more be Communicated to the Creature than *Being it self* can. All the Essences and Abstract Natures of things are in God, or rather the very  
same

same with God (as I shall shew when I consider the Omniscience of God) and they are but *One*, they cannot be *Communicated* or *Multiplicated*. Their *Images* indeed may, but they themselves cannot, for they are the same with God. There may be many Beautiful, or particular Beauties, but there can be but one Beauty it self.

## X.

The Beauty therefore that is in the Creation is only a slender Shadow or Reflection of the Beauty it self which is in God, who is the Idea or Essence of Beauty. And as it is Derivative from it, so it exists continually by it, and in it, and is every way as much depending upon it as the Reflection in the Glass is upon the Face whose Reflection it is. And as Beauty has a more excellent way of existence in the Face it self, than in the Glass, so has it a far more perfect way of subsisting in God than in any Face or thing whatsoever. For all things are Reflections from him, and the whole Creation is but as 'twere one great *Mirror* or *Glass* of the *Divinity*.

## XI.

Lib. II.  
Confes. c. 4.

I end this Contemplation with a very remarkable passage to this purpose out of Saint *Austin*. Tu ergo Domine fecisti ea qui pulcher es, pulchra sunt enim. Qui bonus es, bona sunt enim. Qui es, sunt enim. Nec ita pulchra sunt, nec ita sunt sicut tu Conditor eorum, cui Comparata, nec pulchra sunt, nec bona sunt. *Thou therefore O Lord hast made these things, who art fair, for they are fair. Who art good, for they are good. Who Art, for they are. But neither are they so fair, neither are they so good, neither are they so as thou*  
their

their Maker, in Comparison of whom, they are neither fair, nor good, nor are they at all.

*The Use of this to Devotion.*

**T**HIS may be very much improv'd to the advantage of Devotion. For the great Let to Devotion is our Love of *Particular* and *Sensible* good. 'Tis a Charge that may be fasten'd upon the best of us all, more or less, that we are *Lovers of Pleasure more than Lovers of God*. And the Love of Pleasure Naturally alienates us from the Love of God. And therefore says Saint John, *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.* Joh. 2. 15. And to shew the great inconsistency that is between the Love of the World and the Love of God, he further tells us, *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* But now if we could be but once perswaded that all the Perfections of Particular Beings exist in God, and not only so, but after a more excellent manner than they do in Particular Beings themselves, we should certainly be very much taken off from the love of Particular and Sensible good; we should not be such gross Idolaters as we are in adoring Created Beauty, but should adhere to God with more Unity and intireness of Affection. Sure I am that there is great Reason we should do so, when we consider, that let the good of the Creature be never so Charming, the very same we may find in God with great Perfection. We can propose nothing to our selves in the Creature, but what God has more perfectly and more abundantly. To what purpose then should we go off from him, since

Change

Change it self can give us no variety, and we can only *Court a New Object*, not find a *New Happiness*.

*The Aspiration.*

**N**O, *My fair Delight*, I will never be drawn off from the Love of thee by the Charms of any of thy Creatures. Thou art not only infinitely more excellent than they, but hast their very Excellencies in a more perfect manner than they have or can have. What Temptation then can I have to leave thee? No, O my Fairest, I want Temptation to recommend my Love to thee. 'Tis too easie and too cheap a fidelity to adhere to thee, My first Love, when by Changing I can gain no more.

Psal. 45.

Psal. 45.

Thou, O Sovereign Fair, hast adorn'd thy Creation with a Tincture of thy Brightness, thou hast shin'd upon it with the light of thy Divine Glory, and hast pour'd forth thy Beauty upon all thy Works. But they are not fair as Thou art Fair, their Beauty is not as Thy Beauty. Thou art Fairer, O my God, than the Children of Men, or the Orders of Angels, and the *Arrows* of thy Love are *Sharper* than theirs. They are indeed, My God; *thy Arrows are very Sharp*, and were we not too securely secur'd about with our thick Houses of Clay, would wound us deeper than the Keenest Charms of thy Created Beauties. But these every Day Wound us, while we stand proof against thy Divine Artillery, because these are *Sensible*, and thine only *Intelligible*, these are visible to our *Eyes*, thine only to our *Minds*, which we seldom convert to the Contemplation of thy Beauties.

But



But O thou Infinite Fair, did we but once *taste and see*, did we but Contemplate thy Original Beauty, as we do those faint Images of it that are reflected up and down among our fellow Creatures, as thy Charms infinitely exceed theirs, so would our Love to thee be *Wonderful, passing the Love of Women*.

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## Contemplation IV.

*Of the Attributes of God in general ; particularly of the Unity of God : Which is proved from his Idea.*

### I.

Concerning the Attributes of God in general, I have no more to offer than what is commonly taught in the Schools; from which I find no reason to vary, and of which this I think is the summ and substance, *first*, That the Essence of God is in it self, one only general, simple and intire Perfection, and that therefore the Divine Attributes are not to be consider'd as Accidents really distinct from the Divine Essence, and if not from the Divine Essence, then not from themselves neither.

### II.

But however, Secondly, Since this Divine Essence which in it self is one and the same general Perfection, does exert and display it self variously in its Operations, by reason of the Diversity of Objects, the Attributes of God are by us

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conceiv'd distinctly. Not that they are so in respect of God, with whom they are really one and the same, and consequently so also among themselves, but only with respect to our manner of conception.

## III.

For, *Thirdly*, The Essence of God displays it self variously ( as was observ'd before ) according to the diversity of Objects. But now the narrowness of our Faculties will not permit us to represent such a various and manifold *display* of Perfection in one, simple and adequate conception. We are fain therefore to supply this defect, by framing several *inadequate* conceptions, whereby we represent God partially and imperfectly ; and which we found upon his different Operations ; every one of which is conceived as proceeding from a different Perfection in God, corresponding to that particular Operation.

## IV.

Now tho' this diversity be not real with respect to God, who is one and the same nature, without composition or complication of Being, but only with respect to variety of Objects and Modes of Operation, yet this is a sufficient ground for distinct conceptions ; every one of which may admit of a peculiar definition or explication. The sum is, The Attributes of God are all one and the same as to the *thing signified*, but not as to the *manner of signification*. Or, to word it more Scholastically, they may be mutually affirm'd of one another *in sensu identico*, but not in *sensu formali*. And thus must we be contented to think and talk of God while we see him

him here in a Glafs darkly, till he ſhall reveal himſelf to us more perfectly, and we ſhall ſee him as he is, and know him as we our ſelves are known.

## V.

This being premifed concerning the Attributes of God in general, I proceed now to Contemplate ſome of thoſe particular Attributes of his, which may derive the greateſt influence upon our Piety and Devotion. And among theſe, I firſt conſider the *Unity* of God, by which I underſtand not a Generical, or Specifical, but a *Numerical Unity*, in oppoſition to Plurality or Multiplication. That is, That there is One, and One Only God.

## VI.

The *Unity* of God has been ever more queſtioned than his *Exiſtence*, and there have always been more *Polysheifts* than *Atheiſts*. But for my part, I ſhould ſooner be an *Atheiſt* than a *Polytheiſt*, for I think it a greater abſurdity, that there ſhould be none at all. And I cannot imagine how ſuch a wretched abſurdity as *Polytheiſm* ſhould ever obtain ſo much as it has both in the *Gentile* and *Chriſtian* World, ſince without the aſſiſtance of any other conſiderations, it may abundantly be refuted and concluded impoſſible from the very Idea and Formal conception of God.

## VII.

The Idea of God, is Being it ſelf, and Being it ſelf can be but One ; which I thus demonſtrate. Whatſoever is Infinite in Being can be but One ; but Being it ſelf is Infinite in Being ; Therefore Being it ſelf can be but One. That Being it ſelf

is Infinite in Being, we have proved in the Second Contemplation. The *Proposition*, That whatsoever is Infinite in Being can be but one, is plain. For if there were *more* Infinities, one must be *distinguished* from another, otherwise they could not be more: for not to be *distinguished* is to be the *same*. And if one must be distinguished from another, then one must have some degree of Being which the other has not; For by what else can any thing be distinguished? And if one must have some degree of Being, which the other has not, then to every one of these supposed Infinities, some degree of Being must be wanting, namely, that whereby they are distinguished. And if so, that none of them would be infinite in Being. Therefore Plurality of Infinities in Being, is a contradictory self-inconsistent Notion, and such as cannot be admitted by any person that knows what he affirms.

## VIII.

But further, Being it self has all the degrees of Being, as all other Abstract and universal Natures have all the perfection of their respective Orders. But now what has all the degrees of Being cannot possibly be multiplied. For 'tis a flat contradiction that more than one should have all the degrees of Being. Indeed it may be *communicated*, and there may result as many Particular and Derivative Beings, as Being it self is capable of being *Participated*. But it cannot be *multiplied*, because it has all the degrees of Being. And thus 'tis in all other Abstract Essences, they may be *Communicated*, but they can't be *multiplied*. Thus there may be many Particular

lar Beauties by the various participation of Beauty it self. But suppose Beauty it self to exist, it could not be multiplied; there can be but one Beauty it self, because it has all the degrees of Perfection belonging to its Nature. And beyond all there is nothing.

## IX.

For to him that would add another Beauty it self, I would propose this Question. Has this superadded Beauty all the Perfection of the first, or has it not? If not, then 'tis not Beauty it self, for that is supposed to have all the Perfection belonging to Beauty. If it has, then 'tis the very same with the other, and consequently 'tis impossible there should be any more than one Beauty it self. And why is the multiplication of *Individuals* impossible, but only for this reason, because every Individual has all the Perfection belonging to *that Individuated Nature*. Which therefore does not admit of Plurality or Multiplication. And consequently Being it self having as much all the degrees of Being as any Individual has all the Perfection of that Individuated Nature, is no more capable of Plurality or Multiplication than any Individual is. There is therefore but one being it self, and therefore but one God, which was the thing to be prov'd.

*The use of this to Devotion.*

**S**INCE then there can be but one God, as we have reason in the first place to admire and adore that universal Perfection of his Nature, which renders him *incapable of multiplication*, so

in the next place we may be hence admonish'd how reasonable it is that we should rest and depend wholly upon him, disclaiming and renouncing all false Gods. And that lastly, we should love him intirely and undividedly, with all our Heart, Mind and Strength, without admitting any other into Partnership or Rivalship with him: Which unity and intireness of Devotion we could not maintain, were there more Gods than one. For no one could then have right to exact all our services, nor could we be obliged, or able, to direct all our services to any *one* of them. And much less could we do so to *all*, since (as our Saviour tell us) *no man can serve even two Masters*, Mat. 6. 24.

### *The Aspiration.*

**O** Thou Mighty *One-All*, who art too great to be multiplied, and yet too full not to be communicated, what a *Greatness*, what a *Fulness* is this of thine! O *Rich Solitude*, how unlike is all Created Excellence to thine! Other things are to be admired for their *Numbers*, Thou for thy *oneness* and *singularity*; they glory in their *multitudes*, but 'tis the Prerogative of thy Perfection to be *Alone*.

In thee, my only Centre, I rest, upon thee I wholly depend, for I have none in Heaven but thee, and none upon Earth in comparison of thee. I utterly renounce therefore all absolute Power and Supremacy besides thine, and I will fear none but thee, and obey none but thee. Thou only shalt have Dominion over me, I am only thine, and thee only will I serve.

Many

Many, O God, are the Beauties which thou hast made, and thy whole Creation is fill'd with thy Glory. *There are threescore Queens, and fourscore Concubines, and Virgins without number ;* But *my love, my undefiled, is but one.* Take then to thy self the Empire of my Heart. For all that deserves the name of Love there shall be thine. O that it were more enlarged for thy reception: But thou shalt have it *all*, and I will love thee with my whole Heart, tho' that whole be but *little*. Cant. 6.

O my only Delight, other Gods besides thee, and other Lords besides thee, have often usurp'd a Dominion over me. But *my Heart is now fix'd* O God, *my Heart is fix'd*. It is fix'd upon thee, and how can it ever wander out of the Sphere of thy Beauty ! Or what Beauty is there whose influence may vie with thine ? Or how can I love any but one, when that one, and none but that one, is infinitely Lovely.

## Contemplation V.

*Of the Omniscience and Omnipresence of God.*

### I.

THE unity of God I have demonstrated in the preceeding Contemplation. And now to obviate a scruple that may thence arise, namely, how one single solitary Being should be sufficient to preside over all the *Motions* of the *Natural*, and all the *Affairs* of the *Moral* World, I thought it convenient to proceed next to some of those Attributes, which, when well consider'd, will



make it plain, that this Being, tho' but *one*, is abundantly qualify'd for the Government and Management of the whole Universe. And among these, the *Omniscience* and *Omnipresence* of God are most eminent and conspicuous, which I shall here therefore joyntly Contemplate.

## II.

And first of the *Omniscience* of God. This is a most wonderful and amazing Attribute, consider it which way we will, for it denotes no less than a full knowledge and thorough comprehension of all the things that either are, have been, or shall be. But in the way that I shall now consider it, 'twill appear clothed with peculiar Circumstances of Admiration, and is indeed a Theme more fit for the Contemplation of an Angel, than for the Pen of a mortal Theorist. Here therefore I must beg the peculiar Attention of my Reader, and above all, the peculiar Assistance of that Spirit which *searcheth all things, yea, the Deep things of God.*

## III.

Now in treating of Gods Omniscience, I shall do two things, First, prove that he is Omniscient; Secondly, represent the manner of his Omniscience. To shew that God is Omniscient, I must first consider what *Knowledge* is in general. Now this I define to be in short, a *Comprehension of Truth*. For the clearer understanding of which, the Distinction of Truth must be attended to. Truth then is either of the Object, or of the Subject. And both these are again subdivided. For Truth of the Object is either Simple, whereby a Being is really what it is. Or Complex, which denotes those necessary Habitudes

or Respects, whereby one thing stands affected towards another as to Affirmation or Negation. Then as for Truth of the Subject, we understand by it either a just Conformity between the Understanding and the Object, which is *Logical Truth*, or between the Words and the Understanding, which is *Moral Truth* or Veracity.

## IV.

The Truth with which we are here concern'd, is Truth of the Object. For to know is so to comprehend things both as to their Simple Natures, and as to their Habitues and Relations, as to compound what is really Compounded, and to Divide what is really Divided. To have our Understandings thus accommodated to the Respects and Habitues of things, is *Knowledge*. As for Truth of the Subject in the second sense, as it signifies a Conformity between the Words and the Understanding, we have here nothing to do with it, as being altogether foreign to our present purpose. And in the first acceptation, as it signifies a just conformity between the Understanding and the Object, 'tis but another word for *Knowledge*. For Truth of the Subject in this sense is the conformity of the Mind to Truth of the Object. And so also is Knowledge. To know therefore, is to think of things conformally to their Simple Natures and Mutual Habitues, or, as I first defined it, to *Comprehend Truth*.

## V.

This being premised, That Knowledge is nothing else but a Comprehension of Truth, that is, the having things in the *Mind* with the same Relations of Composition or Division, as they

they stand mutually affected in *themselves*, I thus argue: That Being which Comprehends all Truth is Omniscient.

But God Comprehends all Truth.

Therefore God is Omniscient.

The first Proposition is plain from the Definition of Knowledge. The Conclusion therefore depends wholly upon the proof of the Second; namely, that God comprehends all Truth.

#### VI.

Now for the Demonstration of this Proposition, I desire but this one *Postulatum*, that there are Eternal and Necessary Truths, that is, that there are eternal and immutable Relations and Habitudes of things toward one another, by way of Affirmation or Negation. This is what, I suppose, any body will give me for the *asking*, though I have no great reason to be over-thankful for it, it being a thing so very unquestionable, and withal a Proposition of this *unlucky* quality, that 'tis as much establish'd by the Denial of it, as by the Affirming it. For should any Sceptical Person be so hardy as to say, that there is no such thing as Eternal and Necessary truth, I would ask him this Question: Was that Proposition always true, or was it not; If it was not always true, then there was once Eternal and Necessary Truth, and if once so, then ever so: But if it was always True, then by his own Confession, there is such a thing as Eternal and Necessary Truth. This therefore must be allow'd.

#### VII.

It being therefore supposed that there are Eternal and Necessary Truths, the next Proposition that I shall lay down is this, that the simple

ple Essences of things must be also Eternal and Necessary. For the proof of which Proposition I consider first, that as Truth of the Subject depends upon, and necessarily supposes Truth of the Object, so Truth of the Object Complex depends upon, and necessarily supposes Truth of the Object Simple: That is in other Words, The Habitudes and Relations of Simple Essences, depend upon and necessarily suppose the Reality of their respective Simple Essences. As therefore there can be no such thing as Truth of the Subject, without Truth of the Object, to which it may be conformable; so neither can there be Truth of the Object Complex without Truth of the Object Simple, that is, there can be no mutual Habitudes or Relations of things as to Affirmation or Negation, without the Reality of the things themselves.

## VIII.

For I consider that these Habitudes and Respects, as to Affirmation or Negation, wherein consists objective Truth Complex, do result from the Simple Essences, and can no more subsist by themselves than any other relations can; for the existence of which the Schools themselves make it necessary that they have their *subject* and *term*, upon the Position of which they immediately result, and upon the destruction of which they as immediately cease. As other relations therefore cannot subsist without the existence of *subject* and *term*, so neither can these Habitudes as to Affirmation or Negation, subsist without the real existence of the *Essences* themselves so related.

## IX.

## IX.

But this perhaps will be better illustrated by a particular Instance. Let then this be the objective Truth Complex, *Two Circles touching one another inwardly cannot have the same common Center.* This is a true Proposition. But I here demand, How can it possibly have this certain habitude of Division or Negation, unless there be two such distinct simple Essences as Circle and Center? Certainly there can be no Reference or Relation where there is nothing real to support it.

## X.

This Point therefore being gain'd, That truth of the Object Complex depends upon, and necessarily supposes truth of the Object Simple, and that there can be no mutual habitudes or relations of Essences, as to composition and division, without the Simple Essences themselves; Hence it will necessarily follow, that whensoever the one does exist, the other must exist also; and consequently, if the one be Eternal, the other must be also Eternal. And thus (to recur to the former Instance) if this be a Proposition of Eternal Truth. viz. *Two Circles touching one another inwardly cannot have the same common Center,* then the two distinct Simple Essences of Circle and Center must have an eternal and necessary existence. The short is, there can be no connexion or relation between things that are not, or that do not exist, for being with this or that habitude to another thing, implies *simple Being*, and for one thing to be another, infers and supposes it *be simply*. And if there can be no Connexion or relation between things that are not, then also there can be no *Eternal* connexion or relation between

tween things that have not an *Eternal* Existence. For things cannot be related before they are. But there are such *Eternal* habitudes and relations, therefore the simple Essences of things are also *Eternal*. Which was the Proposition next to be proved.

## XI.

I know very well this is not according to the *Decrees* of the *Peripatetic* School, which has long since condemn'd it as *Heretical* Doctrine, to say, that the Essences of things do exist from *Eternity*. But I have Meditated much upon these things, and I must needs say, that I think it a very certain and very useful Theorem, and that 'tis utterly impossible to give an intelligible account of the *Stability* of *Science*, or how there should be *Propositions* of *Eternal Truth*, but upon this Hypothesis. And I should be thankful to any of the *Peripatetic Dissenters* who would undertake to shew me how there may.

## XII.

I know they endeavour to do it by telling us (and 'tis the only Plea they have to offer) that these habitudes are not attributed *absolutely* to the simple Essences as in actual being, but only *Hypothetically*, that whensoever they shall exist, they shall also carry such relations to one another. There is, says the *Peripatetic*, only a *conditional* connexion between the Subject and the Predicate, not an *absolute* position of either. This goes smoothly down with the young Scholar at his *Logic Lecture*, and the Tutor applauds his distinction, and thinks he has thereby quitted his hands of a very *dangerous Heresie*.

## XIII.

## XIII.

But now to this I return the same Answer (for I need give no other) that I have in my *Metaphysical Essay*. First, I say, that these habitudes are not (as is supposed) only by way of Hypothesis, but absolutely attributed to the simple Essences, as actually existing. For, when I say, for instance, that every part of a Circle is equally distant from the Center; this Proposition does not hang in *suspence*, then to be actually verified when the things shall exist in *Nature*, but is at *present* actually true, as actually true as ever it will or can be; and consequently I may thence infer, that the things themselves already are. There is no necessity, I confess, they should exist in *Nature*, which is all that the Objection proves, but *exist* they must. For of nothing there can be no affection.

## XIV.

But, *Secondly*, Suppose I grant what the Objectioner would have, that these habitudes are not absolutely attributed to the simple Essences, but only by way of Hypothesis. Yet I don't see what he can gain by this concession. For certainly thus much at least is attributed to the simple Essences at *present*, that whensoever they *shall* exist, such and such habitudes will attend them. I say, thus much is attributed *actually*, and at *present*. But now let any Peripatetic of 'em all tell me how any thing can any way be said of that which is not. And besides, 'tis a weak evasion to say that things are not related thus or thus as actually existing, but only conditionally, supposing their existence. For I deny that any thing can be any way related that does *not actually exist*.

*exist.* And 'tis as good as a contradiction to say otherwise. When therefore the Peripatetic talks of a *conditional connexion* between the Subject and the Predicate, and that neither is put *absolutely*, I say, that the connexion is as absolute as it can or ever will be, and that a non-existing subject cannot have any Predicate, or be any way related. And all this I bind upon him by a Principle of his own, that of *nothing there can be no affection*. And let him unwind himself if he can.

## XV.

Having thus far clear'd our way by making it evident, that the simple Essences of things are *Eternal*. The next thing that I consider is, that since they are not *Eternal* in their *Natural subsistencies*, they must be *Eternal* in some other way of subsisting. And that must be in some understanding, or by way of *Ideal subsistence*.

## XVI.

For there are but two conceivable ways how any thing may exist, either *out* of all understanding, or *within* some understanding. If therefore the simple Essences of things are *Eternal*, but not *out* of all understanding, it remains they must have an *Eternal* existence in some understanding. Which is what I call an *Ideal subsistence*. There is therefore another way of existing besides that in *Rerum Natura*, namely in the *Mundus Archetypus*, or the *Ideal World*, where all the *Rationes rerum*, or simple Essences of things have an *Eternal* and *Immutable* existence, before ever they enter upon the *Stage of Nature*.

## XVII.



## XVII.

I further consider, that this understanding wherein the simple Essences of things have an Eternal existence, must be an Eternal understanding. For an Essence can no more Eternally exist in a Temporary understanding, than a Body can be infinitely extended in a finite space. Now this Eternal understanding can be no other than the understanding of God. The simple Essences of things therefore do Eternally exist in the understanding of God.

## XVIII.

But the mode of this must be further explain'd. For it being an unquestion'd Truth, that God is a simple and uncompounded Being; and consequently, that there is nothing in God that is not God himself, As the Schools also rightly have pronounced; We must not conceive these simple Essences as accidents inhering in God, or as Beings really distinct from God, this not comporting with the *simplicity* of the Divine Nature.

## XIX.

The simple Essences of things therefore can be nothing else but the Divine Essence it self considered with his Connnotation, as variously representative or exhibitivive of things, and as variously imitable or participable by them. As the Divine Essence, is thus or thus imitable or partakeable, so are the Essences of things distinguished *specifically* one from another; and according to the *multifariousness* of this Imitability, so are the *possibilities* of Being. From the degrees of this Imitability, are the *orders* and degrees of Being, and from the variety of it, is their *multiplicity*. XX.

The simple Essences of things, thus existing in the Divine Essence, according to these modes of Imitability and Participation, are what we are taught in the *Platonick School* to call *Idea's*. These, in the Language of the Divine Philosophers are *πρῶτα νοητά*, the first Intelligibles, and *ἄσπεκτα μέτρα*, the measures of the things that are, and *τὰ ἀληθινὰ ὄντα*, the things that truly are, and *αἰώνια παρδείγματα*, Eternal patterns, and *ἀθάνατα καὶ ἀσάλευτα ἔχοντα*, things which are always the same and unchangeable, and *τὰ μὴ γινόμενα ἀλλ' ἀει ὄντα*, things that are not generated, but are always; and again *μὴτε γινόμενα, μὴτε ἀπολλόμενα*, that were neither generated, nor will be destroyed. Concerning which, thus Cicero, *Hac Plato negat gigni, sed semper esse, & Ratione & Intelligentia contineri*. These, Plato denies ever to have been generated, but that they always are, and are contain'd in Reason and Intelligence.

## XXI.

Further, these Essences of things, or Ideas thus existing in God, are the true and proper Objects of all Sciences, and (if I may use the Apostle's expression in another case) *σύλον καὶ ἐδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας*, the pillar and ground of truth. These supposed, 'tis easie to account for the Stability of Science, and for Propositions of Eternal Truth, but without them 'tis absolutely impossible. For all things in their Natural Subsistencies are Temporary, Flux, Mutable and Corruptible, and what is so can never stand under Eternal and Immutuable relations.

## XXII.

Further, These Essences are the *Specificall Models* and *Platforms* of all the things that are in this *Ethypal* World. According to these *Eternal Exemplars* were they made; and as is their *Conformity* to these *Measures*, so is their *Perfection*. For 'tis impossible that God should make a World with *Counsel* and *Design*, unless he make it according to something, and that can be nothing else but something existing within himself, something in this *Ideal* and *Archetypal* World. For as *Aquinas* well observes, *In all things that are not made by chance, the Form must necessarily be the end of Generation. But now the Agent does not act for the Form, but only as far as the Similitude of the Form is in him.*

Prim.

Part. Q. 15.

Ar. Prim.

## XXIII.

And what if I should further say, that this *Ideal* World, this *Essence* of God considered as variously *exhibitive* and *representative* of things, is no other than the *Divine λόγος*, the *Second Person* in the ever *Blessed Trinity*. This I think highly agreeable to reason; for I know of no *Hypothesis* that would so intelligibly make out the *Eternal Generation* of the *Son of God*; For according to this account, the *Son of God* must be a *Substantial* and *Multifarious* thought of God the Father, and how this may be generated, and yet be *co-eternal* with God the Thinker, is not very hard to conceive. Since, if an Angel had been *Eternal*, his thought must have been so too.

## XXIV.

I shall add in confirmation of this Notion, a signal passage of the great *Platonist* *Marcellinus*

Ficinus

*Ficinus*, thus discoursing of the Eternal Generation of the Son of God. *Omnis vita prolem suam*, Tom. 1. &c. Every Life first generates its Off-spring within it self before it does abroad without it self; and by how much the more excellent the Life is, by so much the more inwardly to its self does it generate its off-spring. So the vegetative life both in Trees and in Animals generates first the Seed, and the Animal within its own Body, before it casts forth either abroad. So the Sensitive, which is more excellent than the Vegetative life, brings forth by the fancy an Image or Intension of things in it self, before it moves the Members and forms them in External Matter. But this first Birth of the fancy, because 'tis in the very Soul is therefore nearer to the Soul than the Birth of the Vegetative life, which is not in the Soul, but in the Body. So again, the Rational life, which is more excellent than the Sensitive, brings forth in it self the Reason both of things, and of it self, as it were an off-spring, before it brings it into the light, either by Speech or Action. This first Birth of Reason is nearer to the Soul than the Birth of Fancy. For the Rational Power is reflected upon its own Birth, and by that upon it self, by seeking, knowing, and loving its own act and it self, which is not done by the Fancy. So again, the Angelical life, which is more excellent than the Rational, brings forth in it self, by a kind of Divine Instinct, the Notions of it self and of things, before it discharges them upon the Matter of the World. This Birth is more interior to an Angel, than Reason is to her, because 'tis neither derived from External Objects, nor changed. Wherefore the Divine life being the most eminent and fruitful of all, must needs generate an Off-spring more like her self than

any of the rest : And this it generates in it self by understanding, before it brings forth any thing without. God therefore perfectly understanding himself, and in himself all things, he conceives in himself a perfect Notion of himself, and of all things, which is the equal and full Image of God, and the more than full Exemplar or Pattern of the World, &c.

## XXV.

Thus is this Notion of the Ideal World, or of the Essence of God, being variously exhibitive and representative of the Essences of things, made use of by this great Theorist, to explain both the Nature of the Second Person of the Trinity, and the Mode of his Eternal Generation. And I think it does both much better than any other, and indeed as far as conceivable by human understanding. So highly useful is this Doctrin of Idea's, when rightly understood, to unfold the profoundest Mysteries of the Christian Religion as well as of Philosophy: And so great reason had Saint Austin to say, *Tanta vis in Ideis constituitur, ut nisi in intellectis, sapiens esse nemo possit*, There's so much moment in Idea's, that without the understanding of these, no Man can be Wise.

## XXVI.

And I further consider, that this is no less according to the Voice of Scripture than of Natural Reason. Saint John speaking of the second Person of the Trinity, says, *In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God*. He says also that all things were made by him, or according to him *δι' αὐτοῦ*. And he further says, *That he is the true light, that lightens*  
ever

Tom. 4.  
P. 548.  
Q. 46.

every man that cometh into the world. Now what can this signifie but this *Ideal World*, or the Essence of God as variously exhibitive and representative of things? For observe, he calls him  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\theta$ , which here signifies the same as the inward conception or Idea, he says that he was in the *Beginning*, and that he was *with God*, and that he *was God*, and that all things were made by him; Thus far it must be allowed that the agreement is very exact. As for the last part of the character, How this can be said to be the true Light which lightens every Man that comes into the World, this I shall explain when I come to consider the *Nature of Man*, who as I shall shew, sees and knows all that he sees and knows in this *Ideal World*, which may therefore be said to be his *Light*.

## XXVII.

Again, this second Person is said to be the *Wisdom of his Father*, to be the *Character of his Person*, both which expressions denote him to be the same with this *Ideal World*. And by him God is said to have *made the Worlds*: That is according to the eternal Exemplars or Platforms in this *Ideal World*. To which I may add by way of overplus, that noble Description of the Eternal and Substantial Wisdom given us in the Seventh Chapter of the Book of *Wisdom*.  $\alpha\tau\mu\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\iota}\varsigma\ \tau\acute{\omega}\ \delta\epsilon\acute{\omega}\ \delta\omicron\upsilon\delta\mu\omega\varsigma,\ \alpha\pi\acute{\omicron}\rho\rho\omicron\iota\alpha\ \tau\acute{\omega}\ \tau\acute{\omega}\ \pi\alpha\tau\epsilon\rho\epsilon\varsigma\ \tau\epsilon\theta\epsilon\varsigma,\ \epsilon\sigma\sigma\alpha\lambda\epsilon\omicron\varsigma\ \tau\acute{\omega}\ \tau\acute{\omega}\ \theta\epsilon\acute{\omega}\ \epsilon\pi\epsilon\rho\gamma\epsilon\iota\alpha\varsigma,\ \chi\epsilon\ \alpha\lambda\epsilon\omega\upsilon\ \tau\acute{\omega}\ \delta\epsilon\ \gamma\alpha\theta\acute{\omicron}\tau\eta\tau\epsilon\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\omicron}\varsigma.$  The *Breath* (or Vapour) of the Power of God, and an efflux (or Emanation) from the glory of the Almighty, a clear *Mirror* (or Looking-glass) of his active energetick verine, and the Image of his goodness. And what can all this

Heb. i.

be but the Essence of God as exhibitivè, the Ideal World? Lastly, I would have it considered how what our Saviour says of himself, *I am the Truth*, and what the Apostle says of him, that he is the *Wisdom of his Father*, can be verifi'd any other way but by this Hypothesis.

## XXVIII.

I have the longer insisted on this to shew not only the *Truth* of this *Ideal World*, and that the Essences of things have *eternal* Existence in it, but also how very useful this Notion is for the Establishment of the *Divinity* of Christ, and for the explication of his *Eternal* generation from the Father, which is also a further confirmation that the Notion is true and solid. So great a guard is true *Platonism* against *Socinianism*.

## XXIX.

Hence also we may be instructed how to understand that common Axiom of the Schools, *that the Truth of every thing is its conformity to the Divine understanding*: This must by no means be understood of the Mind of God as *Conceptive*, that is, as reflecting upon himself as *Exhibitivè*; for the Truth of the Divine Intellect as *Conceptive*, depends upon its conformity with the truth of things, not the truth of things upon that. But it must be meant of the Mind of God as *Exhibitivè*, that is, of this *Ideal World*, for upon this all Truth depends, and every thing, and every Proposition is so far true as 'tis conformable with it. For indeed the intellect of God as *Exhibitivè* is the *Cause* and *Measure* of all Truth.

## XXX.

And, 'twas for want of the help of this Notion that that Keen Wit *Descartes* blundered so horribly in stating the dependance of Propositions of Eternal Truth, upon the Intellect of God. He saw 'twas necessary (as indeed it is) to make God the cause of Truth, and that Truth must some way or other depend upon him. But then he makes it depend upon the Mind of God as *Conceptive*, and that things are so only because God is pleased so to conceive them. And this he carries so high, as to say, that even in a Triangle, three Angels would not have been equal to two Right ones, had not God been pleased so to conceive and make it. Now I am for the dependance of truth upon the Divine Intellect as well as he, but not so as to make it *Arbitrary* and *Contingent*, and consequently not upon the Divine Intellect as *Conceptive*, but only as *Exhibitive*. That is, that things are therefore True in as much as they are conformable to those *standing* and *immutable Ideas*, which are in the mind of God as Exhibitive, and Representative of all the whole Possibility of Being.

## XXXI.

Now if after all, this Ideal way of things subsisting from all Eternity in God, should seem strange (as I suppose it will to those who are unexercised in these Contemplations) I shall only further say, First, that it must be infinitely more strange that there should be Eternal Truths, that is, Eternal Relations and Habitudes of simple Essences, or things, without the Co-eternal existence of the things themselves



so related. For what should support such Relations? The simple Essences therefore must exist eternally, if their Relations do; and where can that be but in the Mind of God?

## XXXII.

Secondly, I say that this Ideal way of subsisting, ought not to seem such a Bugbear as some make it, since 'tis necessary not only for the saving of Propositions of Eternal Truth, before their Subjects exist in Nature, but even when they do. For even while things have a Natural subsistence, the Propositions concerning them are not, cannot be verified according to their *Natural*, but according to their *Ideal* subsistencies. Thus we demonstrate several Propositions concerning a Right Line, a Circle, &c. when yet in the mean time 'tis most certain, that none of these are to be found in Nature, according to that exactness supposed in our Demonstration. Such and such Affections therefore do not belong to them, as they are in *Nature*, and therefore they must belong to them as they are in the *Ideal World*, or not at all.

## XXXIII.

And if this be true in Propositions, whose Subjects exist in Nature, much more is it in Eternal Propositions, whose simple Essences have not always a Natural existence. These cannot otherwise stand, but by supposing the Co-eternal existence of Simple Essences in the *Ideal World*.

## XXXIV.

I shall add but this one Consideration more upon this Head, that there is no greater sign of the soundness of a Truth, than when its pro-

fest Adversaries do unawares fall in with it.  
 And this I take to be the case here. The  
 Schoolmen who stand devoted to the Authority  
 of *Aristotle*, do notwithstanding by a kind of  
*blind Parturieney*, light oftentimes upon such No-  
 tions, which if thoroughly sifted must needs  
 come to the same with what we have hitherto  
 contended for. For I would fain know what  
 they can mean else by the celebrated *Glass* of  
 the *Divinity*? What can this be but the *Ideal*  
*World* representing all the *Essences* of things?  
 And what else can they mean when they say  
 (as they commonly do) of *Science*, that it is not  
 of *Singulars*, as being flux, temporary, mutable  
 and contingent, but of *Abstract* and *Universal*  
*Natures*? What is this but in other words to  
 confess the necessity of *Eternal Essences* or *Ideas*  
 existing out of and before those *Singulars* whose  
*Essences* they are, in order to the salving the  
*stability* of *Science*? Thus do these Men stumble  
 upon *Truth* blindfold, but not discerning her  
 through her veil, they let her go again.

## XXXV.

Nay, even *Aristotle* himself after all his zealous  
 opposition of *Plato's* *Ideas* has in the fourth of  
 his *Metaphysics* come about to him again, and  
 crossed the very Road which he studied so care-  
 fully to avoid. For discoursing against the *Scep-  
 tics* who allowed no certainty of *Science*, he  
 first shews the ground of their mistake to consist  
 in this, that they thought *Singulars* and *Sensibles*  
 existing without, to be the only *Objects* of *Sci-  
 ence*. His words are, *ἀπὸ τοῦ τὸ ἐν τοῖς αἰσθητοῖς, &c.*  
*The Original of these Mens mistake was this, because*  
*Truth is to be lookt for in things, and they conceiv'd*  
the

the only things to be Sensibles, in which it is certain there is much of the Indeterminate Nature. Wherefore they perceiving all the Nature of Sensibles to be immoveable, or in perpetual flux and mutation, since nothing can possibly be verified or constantly affirmed concerning that which is not the same, but changeable, concluded that there should be no Truth at all, nor certainty of Science. Those things which are the only Objects of it, never continuing the same.

### XXXVI.

Thus having opened the grounds of the Sceptical Doctrin, in opposition to it, he thus adds, *ἡτοιμασμέναι δὲ τὴν ἀποκρίσιν*, &c. we would have these Men therefore to know, that there is another kind of Essence of things, besides that of Sensibles, to which belongeth, neither motion, nor corruption, nor any generation at all.

### XXXVII.

Observe here, that Aristotle does not deny the Consequence of the Sceptick's Argument. No, he allows if the Essences of things are not steddily and immutable, that there can be no certainty of Science. But he denies his *minor Proposition*, and tells him that he goes upon a wrong Hypothesis, in supposing that there are no other Essences of things but Singulars and Sensibles, in opposition to which he says, that there are other Essences of things which are immoveable, incorruptible, and ingenerable. And that 'tis upon these that all Science is founded. Now who would desire a better Establishment of *Platonick Ideas*, than what Aristotle himself has here given? Let any Intelligent Person judge whether this be not a plain giving up the Cause.

So hard is it for a Man not to contradict himself, when once he comes to contradict *Truth*.

## XXXVIII.

It being now from the Premises sufficiently concluded, that the Ideas or Simple Essences of things have an Eternal existence in God, and the manner of this their existence being sufficiently explained, the next advance of my Contemplation is this, that since all the Simple Essences of things do exist in the mind of God, there must also be the Repository of all their several Habitues and Respects, these naturally arising from the other, by way of Natural Result. For as the Relations of Essences cannot exist without the Essences themselves, so neither can the Essences exist without being accompanied with such their Essential Relations. And as before we argued from the Position of the Habitues to the Position of the Simple Essences, so now we may as well argue from the Position of the Simple Essences to the Position of their Habitues.

## XXXIX.

Thus for instance; as from this Eternal Habitue, viz. that a Circle of such a determinate Circumference will have such a determinate Diameter, I may conclude, that the Essence of such a Circle does eternally exist; so again supposing such a Circle to exist, 'tis as necessary it should retain such a *Diameter*. And so in all other instances, the Essence argues and infers the Habitue, as well as the Habitue does the Essence. For 'tis here as in all other Relations which immediately result upon the position of the *Subject* and *Term*.

## XL.

This admitted, I now consider that there is now nothing wanting to infer the Omniscience of God. For since the simple Essences of things do all exist in God, and since these are ever accompanied with all their Habitues and Relations, and since these are nothing else but *Truth*, it follows that all Truth is in God. I say God comprehending within himself all the Ideas and Essences of things with all their possible References and Respects, comprehends *all Truth*, the whole field of Truth within himself, which is the same as to be *Omniscient*, Knowledge being nothing else but a *Comprehension of Truth*, as was before defined.

## XLI.

And thus we have not only *proved* the Omniscience of God, but in a great measure represented the *manner* of it. Concerning this therefore I shall only further remarque that the manner of the Divine Knowledge is the most Noble and Perfect, that can possibly be conceived. For 'tis not by any derivative Phantasms, or Secondary Images of things, but *per αὐτοπαρεὶν τὴν πραγμασίαν* by the very immediate and essential Presence of the things themselves. He has all his Knowledge at the *first hand*, he sees, nay he is *possess* of the very Essence of things, he is the very Source and Fountain of all Truth, nay he is *Truth it self*. And besides, his Knowledge is all simple and uncompounded, without Reasoning and inferring, premising and concluding, for he has ever before him in one simple view the whole Field of Truth, and with one single Act of *Intuition* glances through the whole Possibility of Being. For this

this Word of God, this λόγος, who is the Essential Wisdom of his Father, is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the Heart. Neither is there any Creature that is not manifest in his sight. But all things are naked and open unto the eyes of him, with whom we have to do.

Heb. 12. 12

### XLII.

Thus is this own single solitary Being, God, qualified for the government of the World upon the account of his Knowledge. He is so also in respect of his being Present to the World he is to govern. For he is Omnipresent, as well as Omniscient: Which is the next Attribute of God, which in this Contemplation I undertook to consider.

### XLIII.

The Omnipresence of God has been more questioned than any one of his Attributes, both among the Ancients, and among the Moderns. Aristotle in his Metaphysicks says that the first Mover must necessarily be either in the Center, or in the Circle or Circumference. That is, according to him, either in the middle of the Earth, or in the Extream Heaven. And the latter has by most of the old Philosophers been assigned for his Residence. In the Church, the more Ancient Jews confined him to the Temple of Jerusalem. And of late years this Doctrine of the Partial and limited Presence of God has been renewed by Voorstius, Professor of Divinity at Leyden, who asserts that God is only in Heaven as to his Essence, and elsewhere only in respect of his Wisdom, Power and Providence.

### XLIV.

## XLIV.

But that God is every where Essentially Present, both in every part of the World, and also in all *Extra-mundan* Spaces, is most certain from the very Idea of God. 'Tis impossible that Being it self should be excluded from any part of Being. For every part of Being partakes of, and subsists in and by Being it self. And Beside Being it self is *indeterminate* in Being (as was proved in the second Contemplation) but now what is indeterminate in Being, is also indeterminate in existing, for existing follows Being in the Act of it, and to exist indeterminately is the same as to be Omnipresent. God therefore who is Being it self, is also an Omnipresent Being.

## XLV.

Concerning the manner of this Omnipresence of God, I think I may safely determine that he is every where present, not only *Virtually* and *Efficiently* by his Wisdom and Power, but also *Substantially* and *Essentially*. For Power and Wisdom are not any thing really different from the Essence of God. Neither can the Power of God be conceived to be any where, but his Essence must be there too. But after what special manner the Essence of God is Omnipresent, whether by way of an Infinite Amplitude and Extension, as some think, or else by way of a Point, so as to be whole in the whole, and whole in every part of the World, as others will have it, I neither know, nor shall offer to determine. *Such Knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for me, I cannot attain unto it.* 'Tis sufficient to know, that God is so every way Immenſe and Omnipresent, and not to be *included* in any place, nor to be excluded

ded from any. For the rest, we must say with the Psalmist, *Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised: And his greatness his unsearchable.* Psal. 145.

### *The use of this to Devotion.*

THE Consideration of the Divine Omnipotence and Omnipresence, is of excellent use to all the purposes of a Christian life, as well as to the Interest of Devotion in particular. *I am the Almighty God, walk before me, and be thou perfect,* says God to Abraham. Gen. 17. Implying that the best Method of Perfection, was to live as in the sight and presence of God. And so the Psalmist, *I have set God always before me, therefore I shall not fall,* Psal. 16. Implying, that if any thing would keep him from falling, this would. For can there be any greater restraint upon our actions, any stronger preservative against sin, than duly to consider the Presence and Inspection of God? *In virtutis oculis vivendum;* so again the Ancients, We must live as in the Eyes of Vertue. They thought it an excellent expedient against Vice to have the Idea of Vertue always before one: And so no doubt it is. Nay, we see less will do, and that the Morals of Men are very much secured by living in the Eye of the World: Nay Seneca goes lower yet, and tells us, That *Magna pars peccatorum tolleretur, si peccatoris testis assisteret.* A great deal of our wickedness would be prevented, if as Men were about to sin, one single witness were to stand by. But alas, what are such expedients as these to the Omnipotence and Omnipresence of God? No consideration certainly



tainly is comparable to this. Will a Man commit Murther in the open Court, before the Face of his Judge? Nay, shall the presence of a *Child* divert thee from sinning? A *Child* that knows not the difference between good and evil, that wants understanding to censure and condemn what he sees, and has neither Authority nor Power to punish thee. Shall such a one deter thee from sin, and dash in pieces the *frame* of thy ill designs, and darest thou sin before thy God? Darest thou do works of Darknes in the presence of him who is *pure Light*, and in whom there is no Darknes at all? Darest thou rush on when the Angel of God's Presence stands in the way with a drawn Sword? The *Psalmist* says, *Tremble thou earth at the presence of God*, and darest thou sin in his Presence? No, thou wouldst not dare, if thou didst well consider it. 'Tis a consideration, this, That if well heeded, and attended to, would give a *Law* to our privacy and retirements, compose the *inmost recesses* of our Minds, and not suffer a Thought or Passion to rebel. We should then *stand in awe and not fear* and be as Composed in our Closets as in a Theater, or a Religious Assembly. For, indeed, to him that considers God as every where present and a strict observer of him and his actions, every place is a *Temple*, and accordingly he will put off his Shooes from his Feet, cleanse and purify his affections, because the place whereon he stands is *Holy Ground*.

Thus advantageous is the influence of the two Considerations to good life in general; for their special usefulness to Devotion; we may hence collect, *First*, That we ought to have our

Minds always in a Divine Frame and Temper, and always compos'd with the greatest Awefulness and Reverence, Seriousness, Gravity and Silence of Spirit, as being ever in the Presence, and under the direct Inspection of the Great God.

*Secondly*, That we ought to pray to him with all Humility and Reverence, both of Soul and Body, and with an humble confidence of being heard by him where-ever we are, or however we deliver our selves, whether by *Vocal* or *Mental* Prayer.

*Thirdly*, That we ought in our Prayers to use great fixedness and attention of Mind, without any wandrings, or impertinent mixtures of foreign thoughts, which are never more ready to croud into our Minds, than when we are at our Devotions, and yet are never so absurd as then.

*Fourthly*, That we ever commend our Cause to God, who sees and knows all things, and be well satisfied with his Judgment and Approbation, when ever our Innocence is falsely charged by the World.

And, *Lastly*, That we ought never to repine, or be discontented at the Affairs of the World, but rather trust and rely upon the all-wise conduct of him who sees from end to end, knows how to bring Light out of Darkness, and disposes all things sweetly.

### *The Aspiration.*

O Lord, thou hast searched me out, and known me, thou knowest my down-sitting, and mine  
F,
uprising,

*up-rising, thou understandest my thoughts long before, Thou art about my Path, and about my Bed, and spiest out all my ways. For, lo, there is not a word in my Tongue, but thou, O Lord, knowest it altogether. Thou hast fashioned me behind and before, and laid thine Hand upon me. Whither shall I go then from thy Spirit? Or whither shall I go then from thy Presence? If I climb up into Heaven, thou art there, If I go down to Hell, thou art there also. If I take the Wings of the Morning, and remain in the uttermost parts of the Sea, even there also shall thy Hand lead me, and thy right Hand shall hold me. If I say, peradventure the Darknes shall cover me, then shall my Night be turned to Day. Yea, the Darknes is no Darknes with thee, but the Night is as clear as the Day; the Darknes and Light to thee are both alike.*

Do thou then, O my God, so imprint the Sense of this thy Omniscience and Omnipresence upon every Faculty and Power of my Soul, that I may ever *think, speak, and act* as in the Light of thy All-seeing Eye, and as immediately surrounded, and intimately possessed with the Glory of thy Presence. O fill me with the profoundest Awe and Reverence, compose my levities, confirm my doubtfulness, and fix my wanderings, and make me ever satisfied with the Methods of thy Wise Providence.

And when by the Meditation of this thy Knowledge and Presence, I shall learn to demean myself in any measure as I ought; Grant that upon the same consideration, I may content myself with thy Divine Approbation and Allowance, whatever I am thought of in Mans Judgment. Finally, O my God, Grant I may so *set thee before*

me here, that I may not be afraid to *appear* before thee hereafter. *Amen.*

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## Contemplation VI.

### *Of the Omnipotence of God.*

#### I.

THE next Attribute, whereby this One God becomes qualified for the Government of the Universe, is his *Omnipotence*. Whereby may be understood, and commonly is, a Power of doing whatsoever is *possible* to be done. But in this there is some difficulty, from which we must disengage our Notion.

#### II.

For, whereas every thing that is possible, is made the Object of the Divine Power, a nice enquirer may here demand, what do you mean by *Possible*? For Possible has its denomination from Power, and therefore must be measured either in relation to *created* Power, or in relation to *in-created* Power. If in relation to the first, then for God to be able to do all that is possible, will amount to no more, Than that he can do whatever a *Creature* can do. But if in relation to the second, then for God to be able to do all that is possible, will be the same as to say, that he can do whatever he *can* do. Which would be a very notable discovery. And, besides, according to this measure, a Man might truly say, that God were Omnipotent; tho' at the same time he should deny that he could

Disp. 30. Create any thing besides the *present* World: Be-  
 Sect. 17. cause he could then do all that is possible, there  
 being nothing then but this World so denomi-  
 nated from the Divine Power, as *Suarez* rightly  
 infers.

## III.

To satisfy therefore this difficulty, we must find out another sense of the word *Possible*, than what is taken from denomination to any *Power*. I consider, therefore, that a thing may be said to be possible *Absolutely* and *Negatively*, from the habitude of the *simple Idea's themselves*, as well as from relation to any *Power* which may so denominate it. My meaning is, That there are some *Idea's* whose habitude is such to one another, that they may admit of Composition: There are others, again, whose habitude is such that they cannot admit of Composition, but stand necessarily divided. The first of these I call *Possible*, the second I call *Impossible*. *Possible*, therefore in this sense, is the same as that which involves no repugnance. And therefore to avoid all Ambiguity, setting aside the Word *Possible*, I shall chuse rather to express the Omnipotence of God by calling it a Power of doing whatever involves no repugnancy or contradiction.

## IV.

Now, that God is thus Omnipotent (not to seek out after other Arguments) I thus demonstrate from the Idea of God. Being it self is the proper, full and adequate cause of Being, for whatever is, so far as it is, it partakes of Being it self, as was before proved. Now being it self be the proper, full and adequate cause of Being, then its effects must extend to all those things

things which are not repugnant to the Nature and Reason of Being. For if it did extend only to some certain Ones, then Being it self would not be the proper, full, and adequate cause of Being, as is supposed, but only of this or that particular Being. And if it extends to all things that are not repugnant to the Reason of Being, then it must extend to all but *not being*: For not being only is repugnant to the Reason of Being. God, therefore, who is Being it self, can do all, that does not involve in it the Reason of not Being; but these are only contradictions: God therefore can do whatever does not imply a contradiction, and is therefore Omnipotent. Which was the thing to be proved.

*The Use of this to Devotion.*

FROM the Omnipotence of God, we may take occasion to make these Conclusions. *First*, That we ought to revere and fear him above all the things in the World, and endeavour by the utmost services of a well-ordered life to make him our Friend, considering what a fearful thing it is to fall into the Hands of an Omnipotent Enemy. *I will forwarn you whom you shall fear*, says our Saviour, *fear him, which after he has killed*, Luk. 12.5. *has power to cast into hell, yea I say unto you, Fear him.*

*Secondly*, That when once we have made God our Friend, and engaged him on our side, we then fear no Created Power, whether Human or Diabolical. For if an Omnipotent God be with us, what need we care who is against us. We ought rather to say with the Psalmist, *tho' I walk* Psal. 23.4.

*through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: For thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff comfort me.*

*Lastly, We ought upon Consideration of this great Attribute of God, to repose a firm trust and confidence in all his Promises, tho' never so contrary to the Ordinary Laws of Nature, and to the common Measures of Human Probability. Since our concern is with him, who is the God of Nature, and with whom (as the Angel tells us) nothing shall be impossible.*

Luk. 1. 37.

### *The Aspiration.*

**W**ith thee, O my God, is *Power and Strength* and with thee ought to be *Dominion and Fear*. *My flesh trembles for fear of thee: And I am afraid of thy Judgments.* Thou art *Terrible* *Can. 6. 5,* O my God, as well as *Lovely*, but thou art *all* *Lovely* in thy very *Terror*. *Turn away thine eye from me, for they have overcome me; they have overcome me with their Dread, as well as with their Beauty; For, as thou art Beautiful, O my Love, as Tirzah, Comely, as Jerusalem; so art thou also Terrible, as an Army with Banners.*

O my Omnipotent Love, with what *safety* as well as *delight*, do I sit under thy *Shadow* Thou hast brought me into thy *Banqueting House*, and thy *Banner* over me, is *Power* as well as *Love*, Thy Love is stronger than *Death*; who need I fear, thy left Hand is under my *Head*, and thy right Hand does imbrace me; And why then should any dread approach me? *The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom then shall I fear? He is the strength of my Life, of whom then shall I be afraid?*

O, my God, why is not my Faith like thy Power? Thou canst do all things; And why is my Faith limited? Let me imitate thee, O my God, in this thy Infinity: And grant me such a Victorious, such an Omnipotent Faith, that as to thee nothing is too hard to do, so to me nothing may be too hard to believe. Amen.

## Contemplation VII.

*Of the Divine Justice and Veracity.*

### I.

FROM the Omnipotence of God, I proceed to the Consideration of his *Justice*, this being as necessary a qualification in the Governour of the whole World as the other. Now, by Justice in this place, I understand particular, not Universal Justice. And of particular Justice, not that which is Commutative (for this has no place in God; for, as the Apostle says, *Who has first given to him, and it shall be recompensed to him again?*) but that which is *Distributive*, and consists in a constant will of dispensing to every Person according to his desert.

Rom. II.

35

### II.

This *Justice* of God is the same in the moral World, as *Order* and *Proportion* is in the Natural. 'Tis giving to every thing its due place and station, and disposing it according to its Nature and Condition. For as the Beauty of the Natural World arises from *Proportion*, so does the Beauty



of the *Moral* World arise also from due *Order* and *Proportion*; and as God has strictly observed this Rule in the *making* of the World, having made all things in Number, Weight and Measure, so we may be sure he proceeds by the same Standard in the *Government* and conduct of it, though the exactness of this latter is not so obvious to our observation, as that of the former, nor are we so well able to judge of the *Moral*, as of the *Natural Geometry* of God.

### III.

Now that God is thus Just, always acting according to true *Order and Proportion*, may sufficiently be made out from this single Consideration. All Order and Proportion (as every one I suppose will readily grant) is, in it self considered, lovely and desirable. If so, then it cannot be will'd or refused for it self, or as such. If so, then whenever it is refused, it must be refused for the sake of some other greater good. If so, then this other greater good must be, either the private Interest of the Refuser, or some other Private Interest, or the Publick Interest. But neither of these can here find any admission. It cannot be for the Private Interest of the Refuser who is here supposed to be a Being absolutely Perfect; and consequently not capable of proposing to himself any self-end. And cannot be for the Publick Interest, for the greatest Interest of the Publick consists in *Order and Proportion*. Neither can this Order be violated for the Interest of any other Private Person, because that is not a greater, but on the contrary, an infinitely less good, Order and Proportion being the good of the Publick, which is always greater than any

Private whatsoever. Since therefore Order and Proportion cannot be violated by God for any of these ends, nor for its own sake, it being *as such* lovely and desirable, as was supposed, it follows that Order and Proportion cannot possibly be violated by God at all, and consequently 'tis necessary that God should always effectually *Will Order and Proportion*, which is the same as to be *Just*.

## IV.

By this Justice, or Will of following Order and Proportion, God stands engaged not to punish an Innocent Creature, or to afflict him with any evil greater than that good which he has conferred upon him: Within that compass indeed he may, for that is only to deduct from that Happiness, every degree of which was a free favour. But he cannot impose the least grain or scruple of evil upon him beyond the good conferred, without some demerit of the Creature. Much less will this Justice of God permit that he should predetermine an Innocent Creature, without respect to any Crime, meerly for his own will and pleasure, to everlasting misery. He that can make this consistent with God's Justice, or any Justice in the World, had need be a very good *Reconciler*.

## V.

But now whether God's Justice obliges him to *punish the Sinner*, as well as *not to punish the Innocent*, is a thing that will admit of more question. This has been argued with great Contention between some Schools, and is too disputable to be positively determined. For my part I am more inclined to think that the Nature of God obliges him to punish sin some where or other, and that *vindicative Justice is Essential* to him.

## VI.

## VI.

That it is so far Essential to him that he cannot but punish an *impenitent* Sinner, few I believe will question. For nothing in the World can be imagined more against Order and Proportion than that a Sinner should be *pardoned* without *Repentance*. But further, 'tis highly *probable*, that sin could not have been pardoned even *with* Repentance, had there not also been *Satisfaction* made to God for it. 'Tis plain *de facto*, that God *would not* remit sin without satisfaction, and that too the highest imaginable: Which makes it very *probable* that he *could not*. For is it reasonable to think that God would deliver up his only and beloved Son to that *bitter dispensation*, if, with the safety of his Justice, he could have pardoned us, meerly for our *Repentance*, without such a costly *Sacrifice*? And that he could not, does not that Prayer of our Saviour argue, which he used in his Agony? *Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me*: Which is as much as if he had said, *Father if the sin of Man may be remitted any other way than by way of suffering, I desire I may not suffer*. This I think is the Obvious sense of the Words. But this Prayer of his, was not granted by the removal of the Cup, and may I not thence conclude that 'twas impossible it should be removed?

## VII.

And I further consider that God necessarily hates sin with an infinite hatred, as a thing that is diametrically opposite to his own Essential sanctity, and to those great Ends which he cannot but propose in the regulation of the Universe. But how he should thus hate it, and yet not shew  
this

this his hatred 'by punishing it, is not easie to conceive. And besides it seems agreeable to the Laws of Order and Proportion, that so great a *Dis-harmony* as *Sin*, should never go *wholly* unpunished, but that the Publick happiness, of which Sin is a *violation*, should be both *repaired* and *secured* by the exaction of *some* satisfaction.

## VIII.

If it be said, that every one may remit as much as he please from his own Right, and that then much more may God. I answer, that Right, is either Right of *Dominion*, or Right of *Office*. From Right of *Dominion*, when alone, no doubt any Person may remit what he pleases, but not from Right of *Office*, or from Right of *Dominion*, when joyned with Right of *Office*. Now there is great reason to believe that the exacting of Punishment for sin, is not in God a Right of *Dominion* only, but also a Right of *Office*; that is that God does not punish only as *supreme Lord*, but as a *Judge*; and as a *Judge*, 'tis congruous to suppose that he may be obliged to punish. Obligated, not by any Law or Power superiour to himself, but by the Essential Rectitude of his own Nature and Will: Which by obliging him to regard the Publick Order and Interest, may by consequence oblige him to animadvert upon those who transgress against it.

## IX.

And thus far of the Justice of God, whereby he deals uprightly and equally with all his Creatures, and renders to every own his own, according to their Works, good or bad, without any Partiality or Respect of Persons. The next thing I consider in God is his *veracity*, whereby  
all

all his words are conformable to his Mind and Intention, and all his performances conformable to his words: Whereby he most assuredly makes good all his Covenants, Promises and Threatnings, and cannot possibly deceive his Creatures any more than he himself can be deceived.

## X.

That there is this veracity in God we may be assured from the *All-sufficiency* and *Perfection* of his Being. For all Fraud and Deceit is grounded upon *Indigence* and *Infirmity*. No Man deceives merely for *deceiving sake*, but to serve a turn, to relieve a Necessity. And such a Necessity too as cannot be relieved any other way. For Fraud is not only a Remedy, but the *last* Remedy; men never betake themselves to *tricks*, but when they can't compass their Ends by *Plain-dealing*. But now none of these things can be incident to God, who being above all *Indigence* and *Infirmity*, must of consequence be as much above all *Falshood* and *Deceit*.

*The Use of this to Devotion.*

Considering then that God is thus strictly *Just, True, and Faithful*, 'tis rational hence to conclude, first, how much it concerns us to *Fear* him, and to beware how we render ourselves *Obnoxious* to this his Justice.

Secondly, That we ought always to rest intirely satisfied in the Divine Dispensations, knowing that 'tis impossible but that this Judge of the whole Earth should do *Right*.

And lastly, That we ought readily and firmly to believe him in all the Manifestations of his Mind

Mind and Will, and particularly that we ought to repose a strong Confidence in his Covenants and Promises, being well assured that he is Faithful who has promised.

*The Aspiration.*

**M**Y God, My Judge, who art Righteous in all thy ways, and Holy in all thy works, I delight to think of thee, tho' I am too guilty to contemplate thee, in this thy Attribute, without Fear and Trembling. For there is *Judgment* as well as *Mercy* with thee that thou should'st be Fear'd. *O enter not into Judgment with thy Servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be Justified.*

My God, how strangely Impious are they who dare say or think that the way of the Lord is not equal! My God, I am none of those, nor will I ever be of that profane number. I will ever acquiesce in the Equity of thy Dispensations, whether I am able to comprehend it or no. For I know tho' Clouds and Darknes may sometimes be round about thee, yet Righteousness and Judgment are always the Habitation of thy Seat.

I readily and firmly assent, O my God, to all the Declarations thou hast made of thy Mind and Will. I believe all thy Predictions, all thy Promises, and all thy Threatnings, that they shall be *fulfilled all in their Season*. I know that nothing but Truth can proceed from thee who art Truth it self: I know that thou, O God, can'st not deceive us, O grant that we may not deceive our selves. *Amen.*

Con-

## Contemplation VIII.

### *Of the Divine Goodness and Philanthropy.*

**I** Shall now close up these my Considerations of God, with a *Meditation* upon the *Divine Goodness*, by which I understand a Propension of doing good to his Creatures by the Communication of his own good or happiness. But here upon my first entrance, I find my self plunged beyond my Depth. It is an immense Ocean which no Line can fathom, and where the Sight loses it self in a long boundless Prospect. This is that Attribute which in a peculiar manner adorns and accomplishes the Divine Nature, and renders it Amiable and Lovely, as well as Venerable and Adorable. This is the highest Reward of Angels, and the peculiar entertainment of Contemplative Souls, many of which who had no other guide to follow but the Clue of their own Reasonings, have long since observed that Goodness is the Principal ; and, as I may say, the *Divinest* Attribute of the Deity.

#### II.

This is the *Gentile* Theology intended by making Love the most ancient of all the Gods. And accordingly we find in the Platonick Trinity (which is  $\tau\delta\ \alpha\gamma\alpha\theta\acute{o}\nu$ ,  $\nu\acute{\epsilon}\varsigma$  and  $\psi\upsilon\chi\eta$ ) that the first place is assigned to the  $\tau\delta\ \alpha\gamma\alpha\theta\acute{o}\nu$ , which they conceive after the manner of an immense and most pure Light, continually diffusing and Communicating its invigorative Beams. And this was that which the fine Platonist *Boetius* alluded to,

in that celebrated and graphical description of God, when he called him *Fons Boni Lucidus*, the *Lucid Fountain of Good*. And there is an ancient *Cabalistical Table* supposed to be borrowed from the *Pythagoreans*, which represents in a visible Scheme the Order of the Divine Perfection, wherein 'tis observable that Goodness is seated in the Supreme Circle, which they call *Chether* or the *Crown*, thereby intimating that Goodness presides over, and gives Laws and Measures to all the other Attributes of God.

## III.

And indeed it does so: For thus God's Power serves to execute the Dictates of his Wisdom, and his Wisdom is employed in finding out Objects, Methods and Occasions, for the exercise of his Goodness. Nay, even Justice it self, which at first seems to thwart and reprimand the Inclinations of Goodness, will notwithstanding be found upon nearer inspection, sweetly to conspire and accord with it, nay (what seems a greater Paradox) to be one of the Instances and Exemplifications of it. For God never punishes but when Order, that is, the good of the Universe requires it, and consequently never but when upon the whole 'tis best to do so. So that God's goodness will still be the *Chether*, the *Crown* of all his Perfections.

## IV.

Plato calls God *ἰδέα τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ*, the *Idea or Essence of Goodness*. A very high expression. But says not the Scripture also the same? For when it defines God, it does not say he is Wisdom or Power, but that he is *Love*. Not *Loving*, but *Love* it self. And our Saviour in Answer to him that call'd



call'd him good Master, tells us, There is none good but *One*, that is *God*. As if this Divinest Attribute were *that Honour*, of which God is said  
 Isa. 42. 8. by the Prophet to be so Jealous, that he will not give it to another; not to any of the Sons of Men, no not to the Son of Man.

## V.

And indeed God may well be Jealous of this his *Honour*, since Goodness is that Attribute which does not only render the Deity most lovely to us, but is also most peculiarly beloved by Himself. 'Tis his Favourite and darling Excellence, that which he seems most of all to delight in, and to value as the very Flower and Beauty of all his Excellence. And therefore when *Moses* desired to have a sight of his Glory, his Answer to him was, *I will make my goodness pass before thee.*

## VI.

And how much God is in Love with this his Attribute, we may conclude from the great use and exercise of it. God has exercised his Goodness more than all the rest of his Attributes, that the Stream rises almost as high as the Fountain, and the Instances and Exemplifications of it are almost as infinite as it self. The *Materia* Fabrick of the World is the Emanation of the Divine goodness, and who can tell how large this is, or where the utmost boundaries of it are fixed? Then as for the *Intellectual* part of the Creation, how fruitful has the Divine goodness been, and what a Numerous Progeny has it brought forth! Who can Number the Lords Host? *Thou*  
 Dan. 7. 10. *sand thousands minister unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before him.* All these drive

of the same inexhaustible *Well of Life*, of this *Lucid fountain of good*; and with perpetual Anthems of Praise celebrate the bounty of their Maker.

## VII.

But altho those higher Orders of Spirits, who are seated near the Spring-head of Bliss, enjoy a greater share of the Divine Goodness, and being as it were in a *direct Position* to that All-glorious Sun, must needs drink in more plentiful and more vigorous Effusions of his Light, yet Man, the Younger Brother, seems in some respects to be the Darling of Heaven, and to be Priviledg'd with some peculiar Tokens of Favour. I shall chuse to instance in two. One is, That Man is admitted to the *Grace of Repentance*, and has the advantage of *Second thoughts*, whereas God spared not the *Angels that sinn'd*. The other is, That Man had <sup>2 Pet. 2.4.</sup> the Honour to be Hypostatically United with the *Logos*, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity. So that what was figuratively spoken by God in the Case of *Adam*, is here in some measure really verify'd, *Behold Man is become as one of us*; where- <sup>Heb. 2.16.</sup> as he refused to take upon him the *Nature of Angels*.

## VIII.

These indeed are the two greater Lights that shine most conspicuously in the Firmament, and such as when alone consider'd, would wind up a contemplative Spirit to that Extatic Admiration of the Psalmist, *Lord what is man that thou art* <sup>Psal. 8.</sup> *mindful of him and the son of man that thou visitest him!* But there are also a multitude of lesser Stars, many of which we do not observe, tho we feel and thrive under their Influence; and those which we do we cannot number. God's Favours are too quick for our Accounts, and the Heavenly Manna

falls so thick about our Tents, that we want opportunity to gather it up.

## IX.

But that I may Sail by some Compass in so wide and boundless an Ocean, I consider that the Effects of Gods Goodness to Man may be distributed into these two Kinds in general, *Giving* and *Forgiving*. Those of giving again are of two sorts: Either such as are to be conferr'd upon us after our Work is done, by which I understand the Rewards of Heaven; or such as are given us by way of Earnest, or Anticipation.

## X.

I begin with the last of these, where the first thing that offers it self to our consideration is the *Collation of our Being*; which I do not understand as 'tis generally taken in the Schools, namely, For naked and abstract Existence: For thus to *Be Absolutely* has no manner of intrinsic good in it, but is only a Foundation or Capacity of a good or evil State Indifferently. And this methinks is so very plain, that I should much wonder how so many Metaphysical Heads could espouse the contrary, were it not found to be a convenient Device for the Maintenance of that absurd Paradox, *that 'tis better to Be, tho in extream Misery, than not to be*; which Proposition was also intended for the support of another, every whit as absurd, *viz.* That God may consistently with his Goodness and Justice, inflict eternal Misery upon an Innocent Creature. For since he may (as all grant) Annihilate an Innocent Creature, 'twill follow that he may with less appearance of Injustice, inflict on him eternal Misery, Annihilation (according to these mens Metaphisicks)

being

being the greater evil of the two. And that for this notable Reason, because he that *is*, tho never so miserable, enjoys some good, *viz.* that of Existence, whereas he that is not, has none at all.

## XI.

But now, besides that the good of Simple being, may be outweighed by Super-induced evils, and that then to *Be* all considered, would not be good but evil, as I could easily shew were it my present concern further to ingage in that Controversie; I say, besides this, I do not allow the Truth of the first Assertion, that to be has any intrinsick good in it. And therefore when I begin the Catalogue of the Divine Favours, with the Collation of our Being, I do not understand by the Phrase meerly our being brought into Act indefinitely (existence as such including neither good nor evil in it) but our being made such certain Essences or Natures, consisting of such Powers and Faculties as are requisite to constitute such an Order of Beings as according to such a Mode of Imitability or Idea, is represented in the Divine Understanding, and which we distinguish by the Name of Mankind.

## XII.

Now the Nature of Man involves much good and Perfection in it, and consequently for God to give it Existence is an Act of *Goodness* as well as of *Power*. For tho there be (as I suppose) little or no deference to be paid to that popular Argument, which would derive an Obligation of gratitude upon Children toward their Parents, from their receiving their Being from them, because there is no kindness here designed to those

Persons who in the *Event* (perhaps) are *profited*, but before were not so much as *known*; yet our case is quite otherwise, as to our receiving our Being from the Father of Spirits. For he both knew whom he was to oblige, when he gave us Being, and *intended* it as a kindness to *us*, having no Interest of his own to promote by it. Which are the two Qualifications required by *Seneca*, in his Book *De Beneficiis*, to make up the Nature of such a Benefit as shall lay an Obligation upon the Receiver.

## XIII.

Now both these Requisites being eminently found in God, it follows that his Kindness in giving us Being, receives its Estimate from the value and excellency of the thing bestowed, which cannot appear little if we consider, that such was the Dignity and Excellency of Human Nature, that it occasioned *deliberation* in Heaven, and was thought worthy of the *Council* of the *Trinity*. If we consider, that Man is the most Noble part of all the visible Creation, the Abstract and Compendium of the Universe. That he is a Creature formed after the Image of the Great God, endowed with an excellent and immortal Spirit, and resembling his Maker, as in other respects, so in some measure in this, that he can and must needs be happy both in the *direct* Operations of his Nature, and in the *reflective* acts of Contemplation upon the dignity of his Essence. To give therefore Being to such an accomplished Creature as this, is *ipso facto*, without Consideration of any further design, a very signal act of Love and Beneficence.

Another very signal instance of the Divine Goodness to Man, is our *Preservation*, whether we consider it in the more Metaphysical way of the Schools, as that uninterrupted Influx, which they call Continued Creation, whereon we depend as Essentially as the Image in the Glass does upon the Object; or whether we consider it after the more popular acceptation, as it denotes the Conduct and Superintendency of Gods Providence, whereby he so disposes of the Events and Issues of things, as either to keep off from us what would incommode our welfare, or to work out a more important good from those evils which he suffers to befall us.

## XV.

And here would be matter of wonderful curiosity, and pleasing astonishment, could we but discern from end to end those manifold turns and fetches, those Stratagems and Intrigues, that *Plot* of Providence which is engaged for our preservation through the various Occurrences of Life. Could we but see what a Labyrinth, what a Maze we tread, and what reason there is for every turning; were but our Eyes open'd (as the Young mans were at the Prayer of *Elisha*) to see the <sup>2 King. 6. 1</sup> Bright Host of Auxiliary Spirits that incamp <sup>17.</sup> about us, to see with what care and concern the good Angels contest on our behalf against the Powers of Darknes, as the Guardian Angel of <sup>Dan. 10.</sup> the Jews did against the Prince of *Persia*, and how many dangers both Ghostly and bodily we escape through their Protection, could we I say see all this——But we may be content to *want* the *curiosity*, so long as we *enjoy* the *Benefit*, and  
rest

Psal. 34.

rest satisfied with what the Psalmist assures us of in general, that *the Angel of the Lord tarrieth about them that fear him, and delivereth them.*

## XVI.

Another considerable instance of the Divine Goodness to Man, is seen in the *Provision* made by Providence for the necessities and conveniences of Life, such as Food and Raiment, and the like. This was first exemplified in the *Order* of the *Creation*, wherein 'tis to be observed that the Creation of Man was reserved for the work of the *Sixth-day*, till the World was both *Created* and *Furnished* for his reception; till the Heavenly bodies were prepared to guide him by their *Light*, and the Earth to feed him with her *Fruits*, and then God brings in Man into the World, like a Noble guest to a Table richly spread and set out with Delicacies.

## XVII.

Princip.

Phil. p. 50.

I dare not heighten this consideration so far as some do, who affirm all things to have been made meerly for the use of Man. For although (as 'tis well noted by the *French Philosopher*) upon a moral account, it be of good use to say that God made all things for our sakes, it being a consideration that would serve to excite in us a greater Love and Gratitude towards him, and although in some corrected Sense it be true, in as much as we may make use of all things to some good purpose or other, either as *Objects* to employ our *Philosophy* upon, or as *Occasions* to *Magnifie* the Goodness and Power of our Creator, yet to say that all things were so precisely made for us as to exclude all other purposes, besides that 'tis too boldly to determin concerning the

Ends

Ends of God, and to indulge a fond opinion of our selves, 'tis also plainly absurd and unphilosophical, there being unquestionless many things in the World so far from affording any real use to Man, that they never have been or shall be so much as seen or understood by him.

## XVIII.

However thus far we may venture to determine, and more we need not require, that God had a special regard to Man in the Creation of the World, whom he has constituted Lord of the inferiour part of it, that (as the Psalmist says) *he covered the Heavens with Clouds, and prepared Rain for the Earth, and made the Grass to grow upon the Mountains, and Herbs for the use of Man.* Psal. 147:

## XIX.

But besides this *General* and *Primary* designation of things for the use of Man, there is a more *Particular* and *Secondary* work of Providence to be observ'd in the so managing and Ordering of Affairs, that every Man may have a tolerable Portion of the good things of this Life. And this is effected not by leaving all things in *Common*, or giving every Man a right to every thing, for this would be of pernicious consequence, as tending both to the perpetual *disturbance* of the *Publick Peace*, and to the *utter neglect* and *Disimprovement* of *Nature*; but by the limits and inclosures of *Property*, whereby care is taken that every Man shall either have something of his own, or be maintain'd by the Provisions of those that have. So that some way or other God provides for every member of this his great Family; and though he does not always at our desire bring



**Pfal. 105.** Quails, and fill us with the Bread of Heaven, yet he furnishes every one that travels in this Wilderness with a *Viaticum* sufficient to carry him thro' his Journey ; and tho he does not grant him his *own* wish, yet he grants him that of a *Wiser* Man, and feeds him with food convenient for him.

## XX.

But these are but Prefatory Favours, Dawnings of Goodness, and little Essays of the Divine Love if Compared with those last displays of his Bounty, those Consummations of Kindness which attend Man in the other World, when God shall give him everlasting felicity, and make him glad with the joy of his Countenance. When he shall withdraw his Hand from the Clift of the Rock, and shew him all his Glory. When he shall remove the Bounds from the Mount of his Presence, and admit him to the *Comprehension* of an Intuitive Beatitude. This is that great Portion, that Final Patrimony which is laid up for Man, and which (as our Saviour says) shall be given to those, *for whom it is prepared*. To those, who do not by their own default forfeit their Inheritance with the Saints in Light.

**Mar. 10.**

## XXI.

And thus far of those effects of the Divine Goodness to Man, which are manifested by giving. The next is that of *forgiving*. This is that peculiar Instance of Favour, whereby Man stands distinguish'd from the rest of the Sons of God, as the great Favorite of Heaven. For though the Angels were all Partakers of God's Love and Bounty, yet 'twas Man alone that was made choice of to be the Object of his Mercy.

**De Nat.**  
**Hom. p. 22.**

ὁ ἄνθρωπος τῶν λογικῶν ἑξαιρέτων ἔχει τὸ συ. *fratrum*

ἡ τὴν μετανοήσαντος Says Nemefius. For 'twas Man alone, among all Rational Beings, who had the Priviledge of being pardon'd by Repentance. A Favour extraordinary, whether we consider the great Benefit that accrues to Man by it, in being freed from the Curse of the Law, and restored to a Capacity of arriving to that Happiness, for which he was first designed, or the wonderful means of effecting it. For that God should bow the Heavens and come down, empty himself by taking upon him the Form of a Servant, and humble himself yet further, by becoming Obedient even unto Death, this is that Stupendious unutterable instance of Mercy, that Mystery of Goodness, which the Angels desire to look into, which they admire and cannot Comprehend, sound and cannot Fathom, and which while they Contemplate, Man enjoys.

*The use of this to Devotion.*

HAVING now tasted and seen in some Measure how good and gracious the Lord is, let us now apply this speculation to the advantage of Devotion. This I shall do, First, by considering what may be collected to this purpose from the Goodness of God in General; Secondly, by the shewing how the several Instances of the Divine Goodness point out to us the exercise of several Devotional vertues. And first, since God is so good a Being, and so good to Man, 'twill become us in the first place to banish all superstitious slavish Fears and jealous apprehensions of him, considering that 'tis more for the Honour, and more according to the Will of so Good a Being,

Being, to be *heartily loved*, than *servilely feared*, and that 'tis *Love* and not *Fear* that has the Honour to fulfil the whole Law.

*Secondly*, God being so Good, and having shewn so much Goodness to us, 'twill highly become us in the next place to acknowledge this his Goodness by all the ways we can, especially by these Three, *Praying to him, Depending on him, and Praising him*. By every one of these, we acknowledge God's Goodness, either directly, or by consequence; but most of all by the *last*, which ought therefore to be principally regarded. This I therefore take notice of, because 'tis a thing wherein we are generally defective, for we are all apt to be more zealously affected in our *petitionary Prayers*, than in our *giving Thanks*. And the reason, I suppose, is, because our *Prayers* are for our *selves*, but *giving Thanks* is to *God*. But certainly this is a great fault, and proceeds from that root of all evil, *self-love*; we ought rather to address ourselves to God with more Application and Devotion in our *Praises* than in our *Prayers*. For he that *Praises*, glorifies God more than he that *Prays*, for he that *Prays*, does only hope that God will be good to him, but he that *Praises*, does *actually* acknowledge that he is already so. There is more excellence in *Praise* than we are commonly aware of. To *Believe, Pray* and *Trust* is the work of Earth, but to *Adore* and *Praise* is the work of Heaven. But not so as to be reserved till we come thither. No, we must begin here, or we shall never do it hereafter. 'Tis the only retribution God expects from us for all his Goodness, to be blessed for his Blessings; and unless we do this, we shall be guilty of the high

est injustice and ingratitude imaginable, and of such a vileness, as all the *Praying* in the World will never countervail.

But as we are obliged to act thus from God's Goodness in general, so the several Instances of the Divine Goodness point out to us the exercise of several Devotional Vertues. For example, when a Man considers God as the Author and Preserver of his Being, what inference can be more natural, than that he should present unto him himself, his Soul and Body to be a *reasonable, holy and lively Sacrifice*, that he should employ all his Powers and Faculties, in the Service, and to the Glory of him that gave them, and love him with all his Heart Mind, Soul and Strength? Again, when he considers the guard which Gods Holy Angels keep over him, and the many Deliverances vouchsafed him through their Protection, What inference can be more obvious than that he rest secure under this defence of the most High, and abide with confidence under the shadow of the Almighty, that he sing Praises to God in the multitude of these his *strong Mercies*, and be ever mindful of that saying, *Grieve not the Angel, lest he smite thee: Do nothing against him, lest he forsake thee.* Again, when he considers the plentiful provision God has made for him as to this Life, that his Lot is fallen to him in a fair ground, and that he has a goodly Heritage, what is more naturally to be inferred than that he offer up to God the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, for all the Methods, Conveyances and Instruments of his Bounty, and that he trust his Providential care for his future maintenance? Again, when he considers that weight of  
Glory

1 Cor. 6.

Glory prepared for him in the other World, what can be more natural for him, than with Angels and Archangels, and all the Company of Heaven, to Laud and Magnifie his Glorious Name, and to press forward to some degrees of excellency, in the Service of him who has thus prevented him with such excesses of Kindness, such depths of unsearchable Love? *Lastly*, when he considers those astonishing Miracles of the Divine Mercy and Condescension in the Redemption of the World, in the Assumption of our Nature, and the humble submission of our Blessed Lord to the Pains and Dishonours of the Cross, what can be more natural, than that after a Hymn of Praise and Adoration to him that sitteth on the Throne, and to the Lamb, he look upon himself now as no longer his own, but bought with a Price; and accordingly glorify God in his Body and Spirit, which are God's; that he dishonour not that Nature which is made one with the Divinity, and advanced above the Seraphims; and that lastly, he endeavour to copy out some of the imitable strokes of his Saviour's Humility, and (in the Apostle's Phrase) *let the same mind be in him which was in Christ Jesus.*

*The Aspiration.*

**O** *My great and good God, who art good in all thy Greatness, and whose chiefest greatness is to be Good ; How can I possibly think or mis-  
trust of thee, distrust thee, or harbour any jealous apprehensions concerning thee? And how unworthy should I be of this thy Goodness if I should !*

But, O God, my Love, 'tis my infirmity to be afraid of that Excellence which I should rather love, for my love of thee is not yet perfect enough to cast out all fear ; but blessed be thy Goodness, who in the midst of my fears and doubtful surmises art pleased to remind me of thy Nature, and to say to my Soul, as thou didst once to the diffident Disciples, *It is I, be not afraid.*

*The Voice of my Beloved !* I will therefore turn my fears to love, and love more than I ever yet feared or loved. *I will also magnify thee, O God, my King : And I will praise thy Name for ever and ever. Every day will I give thanks unto thee : And praise thy Name for ever and ever. For I have tasted and seen how gracious thou art, and I find it is a good thing to Praise thee : And that 'tis a joyful and pleasant thing to be Thankful. I know, O my God, that thy Goodness is as much above my Praise as thy Greatness is above my Comprehension. My Praises can add nothing to thee, neither can I Praise thee according to thy Goodness. But, O my God, I will Praise thee according to my strength, and I know that the same Goodness of thine, which is too great to be praised worthily, is also too great not to accept our unworthy Praises.*

My

*Psalm 145.*

My God, I know thou requirest from me only the Praises of a *Man*, but I am troubled that I cannot Praise thee as an *Angel*. O that I were now in Heaven, if 'twere only that I might Praise thee as thy *Angels* Praise thee: This, O my God, I will do hereafter; my Gratitude shall run then as high as theirs, and it shall be as lasting too; it shall last as long as thy Goodness and my Being lasts; and as thy *mercy*, so my Praise shall endure for ever.

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THE

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T H E  
SECOND PART.

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Wherein the  
Grounds and Measures  
O F  
DEVOTION  
Are Consider'd from the  
Nature of Man.

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THE  
SECOND PART

Grounds and Measures

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DEVOTION

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# Contemplation I.

*Of Man, consider'd as a Creature.*

## I.

**I**N Man, as thus consider'd, I find these four things involv'd, First, That he was once nothing. Secondly, That from nothing he became Something. Thirdly, That he was made Something, and is what he is by and from God. Fourthly, That he so depends upon Gods continual Influence for the continuation of that Being which he receiv'd from him, that should God but never so little withdraw it, he must necessarily fall back into his first Nothing.

## II.

First, then I consider that Man was once Nothing, which is the same as to say, That once he was not, or that he was not always. This is too acknowledg'd a Proposition to need any *laborious* Proof; but however for satisfaction sake, I thus demonstrate it. If Man were always, he would be a necessary Being. For since every thing is necessary while it is, and since there is no assignable Point of Duration wherein that which always is, is not, it follows that if Man were always, he would be a necessary Being. But now that Man is not a necessary Being I prove thus:

## III.

Man has not his Being from himself, but from some other Being; For if he had it from himself, he would never have limited his own Being, and consequently would have had all other Perfections as well as Existence. But that he has not is plain, because he is an *Amorous* and *Desiring* Being

ing, and is continually reaching out and aspiring to some further Excellence, which is a certain Argument of *Indigency*. Whence it follows, that he had not Being from himself.

## IV.

He must therefore have it from some other Being, that is, He must therefore exist, because some other Being will have him to exist. If then the Ground and Reason of mans existing be the Will and Pleasure of some other Being, then Man must so far exist necessarily, as 'tis necessary that that other Being should will his existence. Since the necessity of the Effects depends upon the necessity of the Cause: To shew therefore that Man does not necessarily exist, 'twill be enough to shew that 'tis not necessary that any such Being should will his Existence; which I do thus:

## V.

'Tis not necessary that any Being should effectually will that which is not necessarily Lovely. But Man is not necessarily Lovely; therefore 'tis not necessary that any Being should effectually will the Being of Man. The first Proposition is Self-evident. The second will be made so, by considering that necessary Loveliness is the highest degree of Loveliness, and the highest degree of Loveliness, supposes the highest degree of Excellence; that which is *lovely* in the highest degree, must be *excellent* in the highest degree, every thing being lovely so far as it is excellent. But now Man is not Excellent in the highest degree, because he aspires to higher excellence (as was said before) and therefore neither is he Lovely in the highest degree, and therefore not Necessarily Lovely. Which was the Minor Proposition.

position. The Conclusion therefore follows ; that 'tis not necessary that any Being should effectually will the being of Man. And therefore also 'tis not necessary that Man should exist, the reason of Mans existing being founded upon the will of some other Being, as was supposed. And if Man does not exist *necessarily*, then he did not exist *always* ; and if not *always*, then once he was not, which was the thing to be here made out.

## VI.

The next thing to be consider'd is that Man became Something from Nothing : Which is the same as to say that he was not made out of any Pre-existent Matter or Substance. This, tho it be more strictly verifi'd of the *Soul* of Man, which in no sense was raised into being from any pre-existent substance, but came immediately from Nothing to be what it is, yet it is also verifi'd to all intents and purposes in respect of his *Body*, which tho it be not *immediately* from Nothing as the Soul is, yet *Mediately* it is, it being form'd not from Matter eternally Pre-existing, but from Matter which once was nothing, it being impossible that there should be any eternally pre-existing Matter, or that Matter should always have been, for the very same Reason that Man could not have been always ; which having already set down, I shall not again repeat it.

## VII.

The third thing involv'd in Mans being a Creature, is that he was made something, and is what he is by and from God. This will be thus Demonstrated. All Being is either Being *Essentially*, that is, Being it self, or Being by *Participation*. Now Being it self is God, as has been shewn be-

fore : And there can be but one Being it self, as was also shewn before. Therefore all Beings besides this one Being it self, besides God, are Beings by *Participation*. Now whatever is In any thing by Participation, is caused in it by that to which it essentially belongs. Man therefore being a Being by Participation, must necessarily be from and by Being it self; that is, from and by God.

## VIII.

Should it be here Objected that Nothing hinders, but that a thing may be found without that which is not of the Reason or Essence of it, as a Man suppose without Learning. And that this Habitude of being caused by Being it self, or God, is not of the essence of Beings, because they may be conceiv'd without it. And that therefore nothing hinders but that there may be some Beings that are not from God. To this I answer, That tho this Habitude does not make any part of the Idea or Essence of those things which are caused, yet it is necessarily consequent to it. For to be a Being by Participation does as much virtually involve its being caused, as a Triangle involves this Affection, that any two sides of it taken together are greater than the third. So that such a Being can no more exist without being *caused* than a Triangle can exist without this Affection. But whereas the Habitude of being caused, is not of the Reason of *Being Simply*, or *as such*, therefore there is a *Certain* being that is not caused which is God.

## IX.

The same Conclusion, that Man has his Being from God, may be further proved from this Consideration, that none can possibly Create be

God.

God, The truth of which Proposition is generally founded upon the Distance that is between Being and not Being, which they say is infinite, and therefore it must require an Infinite Power to reduce a thing from one to the other. But this is an obscure way of arguing, and I must profess that I do not so clearly understand it as to be satisfy'd whether it be conclusive or no ; and therefore I shall rather chuse to say, that the most universal effect must have the most universal cause. But now among all Effects, to make a thing to *be Simply* is the most Universal. And this is *Creation*, which implies not only a production of this or that Being, or of a Being according to this or that Nature or Quality, ( for this is also done in *Generation* and *Alteration* ) but also of Being Absolutely : For the immediate Terms of Creation are from *not being* to *be*, and then afterwards comes in to be *this* or *that*, *thus* or *thus*. Creation therefore is the most Universal Effect that is, and consequently it must be reduced into the most Universal Cause that is, which is God. Therefore God only can Create ; therefore all Creatures are from God, and consequently Man receives his Being from no other but God.

## X.

'Tis now further to be consider'd, that as Man receives his being from God, so he depends upon God's continual influence for the continuati- on of it, insomuch, that should God never so little withdraw it, he must necessarily fall back in- to his First Nothing. For besides, that to conti- nue in being is as much an *Universal Effect* as to make to be, and consequently must be resolv'd into the same Universal Cause, which is God.

I further consider, that Being by Participation is wholly and intirely from Being it self. Now every Effect depends upon its Cause as far as it is its Cause. If a Partial Cause, then it depends upon it Partially ; if an Intire Cause, then it depends upon it Intirely. Since therefore Being by Participation is wholly and intirely from Being it self, it follows that it must depend wholly and intirely upon it, and if so, then it must depend upon it for every minute of its Existence, as well as for the very first Instant of it ; otherwise it would not depend upon it wholly and intirely ( as is supposed ) there being something in reference to which it would be Independent.

## XI.

*Medit. De  
Prima Phi-  
losop. Medit.  
3.*

I further consider with *Cartesius*, that since the Time of our Life consists of innumerable Parts, every one of which does by no means depend upon that which went before, from our existing a little before it, does no way follow that we shall exist now. I say, it does no way follow, that because we existed a little before, we shall therefore exist now ; or that because of our existing now, we shall exist afterwards, there being no necessary Connexion between the Moments themselves, whereof our Duration is made up. If therefore we do exist in several Instants or *Nows* of Time, this must be from some Cause which conserves us, and as it were gives us being in every one of those *Nows* or *Moments*. But this cannot be our selves, first, for the reason alledged by *Cartesius*, because we are not *Conscious* of any such Power, which undoubtedly we should be if we had it. And Secondly, because we might then have given our selves the *First Now* or *Mo-*

ment

ment of existence as well as any of the *Rest*. For the first Now of Existence differs no otherwise from any of the rest but only as to *Novitas Essendi*, or the *Newness* of existing, which is only an extrinsecal Relation, and such as adds nothing to the difficulty or greatness of the Effect ; which being the same on both hands, the Cause must also be of equal Force and Vertue. But we could not give Being to our selves ( as was before proved ) and therefore neither are we able to Conserve our selves in being. The Cause therefore by which we are conserv'd in being, must be the same which gave us Being, that is, God ; without whose continued Influence we can no more go on in our Existence, than we could at *First Be*.

## XII.

This I cannot better illustrate than by that dependence which an Image in the Glass has upon the Face whose Reflexion it is. The Image is not only caused by the access of the Face to the Glass, but does also so necessarily and substantially depend upon and subsist by its Presence, that at the first removal of it, it immediately vanishes and disappears. And so 'tis with us, we are not only at first brought into being by God, but do also all along so depend upon his Influence for the carrying on our being thro' the several Distinct Moments of time, that should this Influence but never so little be withdrawn or intercepted, we should immediately sink down into our *first nothing*.

## XIII.

And were it not thus, 'twould be impossible that God should ever *Annihilate*. For Annihilation cannot be done by any *Positive Act*, because the Term of Annihilation is, *not being* Simply.



Job. 6.

But now every Positive Act tends to *being*. So that even Physical Corruption is not a Positive Motion, but only in as much as at the Exclusion of one Form another is introduced by way of *Comitancy*. Much less therefore can Annihilation be Positive. If therefore God be able to Annihilate it can be only by *Privation*, that is, by suspending that Influence upon which we depend for every Moment of our Existence; and without which we cannot exist. And thus *Job* expresses the Mode of Annihilation, when he says, *O that it would please God to destroy me, that he would loose his hand, and cut me off.*

## XIV.

Heb. 1.

As for the *Particular Mode* of our dependence upon God, and what this Divine Influence whereby we are Conserv'd in being, this is a Theory much above our Capacity to Comprehend, and therefore I shall not much employ my Curiosity about it. But might I have leave to *Divine*, I would say, That the Creature depends upon God after some such way as the Image in the Glass does upon the Face. That this *Ectypal World* is only the Image or Reflexion of the *Archetypal* or *Ideal World*, and so depends upon it, and subsists by it, as all other Images do upon their Originals. And that the *Presentialness* of this *Ideal World* must be supposed to be some way or other *intercepted* in order to the *Annihilation* of either this whole *Ectypal World*, or of any particular Creature in it. And this seems to have good foundation in Scripture, which says, that all things are upheld, or born by the *Word* of God's Power, that is, by the Divine *λογος*, the *Ideal* or *Archetypal World*; by whom also in the same

same place, the Worlds are said to have been made.

*The Use of this to Devotion.*

Great is the advantage that may be made hence, to the purposes of Devotion. For, first, if Man was once nothing, this lays a very proper and reasonable ground for *Humility* and *Poverty of Spirit*. 'Tis usually thought a very humbling consideration, to remind a Person of the meanness of his *Original*. But, now, what Original can be so mean as to come from *nothing*? Now this is the condition of Man. He had his Rise from *nothing*, and derives his Pedegree by his *Mother's side*, from Darknes and Emptiness. And tho' now by the Omnipotence of his Creator he is something, yet still he *holds* his being as precariously as he *first receiv'd* it, and depends as much for his existence upon the Will of his Creator, as Light does upon the Sun. God *spake the word*, indeed, before he was made; but to *unmake* him, he need only be *silent*, and not sustain him by the *Word of his Power*. And shall that Being be *Proud* which was once *nothing*, and needs only a *meer Negative* to bring him to nothing again? No, says the wise Man, *Pride was not made for man: Nor furious Anger for them that are born of a woman.*

Secondly, As this affords us grounds of Humiliation, as to our selves, so we have hence Reason to adore and magnifie that *Power* which was so great as to be *able*, and that *Goodness* which was so great as to be *willing* to bring us from nothing to something.

And

And since all this proceeds wholly from God, to whom we not only owe our beings, but our whole perseverance in being ; hence in the last place appears the great equity of giving up our whole selves, our Soul, Body and Spirit, to the Service and Glory of that God in whom we live, move, and have our being ; which, considering the great Benefit of Creation, and the Right which God thereby acquires over us, must needs be a very *reasonable Service and Sacrifice.*

### *The Aspiration.*

**M***Y* God, *my* Creator, how can I be ever sufficiently *humble*, when I consider that I once was not ; when I consider that even thou with all thy Omnipotence can'st not reduce me to a lower degree of nothing than that from whence thou took'st me ! When I consider that I still so depend upon thee, that I cannot subsist one moment without thee ! What a *vanity*, what a *shadow*, what a *nothing* then am I, who once was not, and now am only because Thou art, and can no longer stand in being than supported by the Arm of thy Power !

O my God, I know not whether of the two I ought more to Adore and Magnifie, either that *Power* that could raise me from nothing, to be what I am, or that *Goodness* which could determine that *Power* to so strange and wonderful a Production. *One deep*, O my God, *callesth upon another*, and my thoughts are all lost and swallow'd up in *both*.

Praise and Adoration be to thee, O my great and good God, for 'twas from thy Power and Goodness

Goodness that I receiv'd my Being. *Thou art he that took me out of my Mothers Womb, and thou also wast my Hope when I hanged yet upon my Mothers Breast. I have been also left unto thee ever since I was born : Thou art my God even from my Mothers Womb. My Soul still hangeth upon thee : Thy right Hand does uphold me. Thou holdest my Soul in life, and suffereest not my Feet to slip.*

To thee then, O Father of Spirits, I give up and devote my whole self, for I am intirely from thee, intirely by thee, and therefore intirely thine. How then can I ever offend thee, or rebel against thee, with whose Powers which thou hast given me, and dost still uphold and maintain in me ! My God, I will not, but as thou art he whose I am, so thou shalt be he whom I will ever serve. Free me therefore, O God, from my Passions, and make me but once *my Own*, and I will then ever be *Thine*. Amen.

## Contemplation II.

*Of Man consider'd as an Intelligent Creature.*

### I.

**I**N the Creation of Man there are two things chiefly to be remarked. *First, The Council and Deliberation* of the Blessed Trinity, expressed in these words : *Let us make man.* *Secondly, The immediate Pattern or Platform*, according to which he was to be made, expressed in these words, *In our Image, after our own likeness.* Now both these denote the peculiar excellency of human Nature ; but especially the latter : For what can make  
more

more for the excellency of Man's composition than to say, that he was made after the *Divine Likeness*. II.

This Divine likeness, not to mention any other instances of resemblance, I take to be most conspicuous in this, that as in the Divine Nature there are two Processions; one by way of *Intellect*, which is the λόγος, or Word, and the other by way of *Love*, which is the Holy Spirit. So likewise in the human Nature there are as it were two Processions, and that of the same kind too as in the Divine *Understanding* and *Love*. By these two Noble and Divine Powers branching forth from the Soul, Man chiefly resembles God, and becomes a little Image of the Trinity.

## III.

My business at present is only with the first of these, namely, the *Understanding* of Man, or to consider Man as an *Intelligent Creature*. Here therefore I shall shew, *first*, the *Kinds* of human Knowledge; *Secondly*, the *Mode* of it. Now, as to the *Kinds* of human Knowledge, I consider *Contemp. 5.* that since Knowledge in general (as was before noted) is a *Comprehension of Truth*, as many ways as a Man may comprehend Truth, so many ways he may be said to know. Now a Man may comprehend Truth, either as to *Simple Essences*, or as to their *Complex Habitudes*, or as to the *Dependence* that is between one Habitude and another. The first of these is what we usually call *Apprehension*; the second is what we call *Judgment*, and the last is what we call *Discourse*. Thus we are authorized to speak by the Schools, who ascribe Judgment and Discourse to the *Understanding*; tho' I am rather of Monsieur *Malebranche*'s

his mind, that there is no other Operation of the *Intellect* but only *Perception*, and that Judgment and Discourse more properly belong to the *Will*, as being an embracing of, and an adhesion to Truth. But then, withal, it must be acknowledged, that there is a threefold Perception. One whereby I perceive a simple Object, without any relation which may be call'd a simple Perception. Another, when I perceive the relations of simple Essences, which may be called a Judicial Perception. And a third, when I perceive the relation that is between those relations, which may be called a Rational Perception. This is the whole Latitude, and full Compass of the Intellect, and that which belongs to Intellect in common, whether Human or Divine.

*De inquir.  
rend. verit.  
l. 1. cap. 2.*

## IV.

For I think it no absurdity to say, that in this sense God has *Reason* and *Discourse*. For 'tis most certain that he does not only perceive the simple Essences of things, and their relations, but also the relation that is between those relations. Only there is this difference, that God perceives all this at once, with one intire simple view ; whereas Man is fain to *open his Prospect* by degrees, by advancing step by step from one proposition to another in the *field* of Truth. Which, tho' it has appropriated to it self the name of *Reason*, yet I think it does not belong to the *nature* of Reason in *general*, but is rather an *accidental defect* of it, such as proceeds from the *narrowness* of created, or of such or such created Capacities. This must not therefore be made necessary to *Reason* (that being sufficiently salv'd in perceiving the relation that is between the *Habitudes* of things ) but only to *Human Reason*.

V.

And thus much as to the *Kinds* of human Knowledge. I come now to explain the *Mode* of it, by shewing how Man understands. This perhaps will appear a desperate undertaking at first sight ; but I think the difficulty proceeds more from the prejudices of our Education than from the remoteness of the Theory. For were we not otherwise prepossess'd from the Principles of the vulgar Philosophy, what would be more familiar and obvious than to conclude that we see and know all things in *God*? This is a Notion which I very early lighted upon, by the *Natural Partiality* of my own mind, before I had consulted with any Authors that might imbue me with it. But afterwards I met with some that confirm'd me in it. For it is a Notion very frequently touch'd upon by *Platonists* ; by *Plotinus*, by *Proclus*, by *Marsilius Ficinus*, by *St. Austin*, by the late French Philosopher *Du Hamel*, in his Book *De Mente Humana*, and is sometimes glanced at by *Aquinas* himself, but by none that I know of so copiously, so purposely, and so dexterously managed as by the incomparable Monsieur *Malebranche*, who, I think, has established the truth of it beyond all cavil or exception, as well as reasonable doubting. I shall therefore, for the clearing of this Argument, first give a short and summary account of what that excellent Person has meditated upon it, and then subjoin some further considerations of my own to the same purpose.

## VI.

*De inquir.  
rend. verit.  
l. 3. part. 2.  
6. 1.*

First then, Monsieur *Malebranche* lays down this preparatory Position, that those Objects which are without the Soul, cannot be perceiv'd by themselves

( III )

themselves, but by the Mediation of *Ideas*. This Proposition is most unquestionable, taking *Ideas* in a large signification for Images or Representations of things. For things that are perceiv'd must be some way or other Present to the Soul, either by *themselves* or by their *Representatives*. And since they are not by themselves, they must be by their *Ideas*. And so much is acknowledg'd on all sides. Here therefore being no *Controversie*, there needs no more Proof.

VII.

This premised, he thus proceeds. It is therefore necessary that these *Ideas* which we have of Objects without, should either proceed from those Objects: Or that our Mind has a Power of producing those *Ideas*. Or that God should produce them with the Mind when he creates it, or that he should produce them as often as we think of any Object. Or that our Mind should possess in it self all the Perfections which it sees in things. Or lastly, that it be united to some Absolutely perfect Being, that includes in himself all the Perfections of Created Beings. By one of these ways we must necessarily perceive whatever we perceive.

VIII.

The first is according to the vulgar Philosophy, which teaches that external Objects send forth certain Species like themselves, and that these Species are carried by the external Senses to the *common Sensory*, and that then they are refined, and spiritualized by the help of that which they call *Intellectus Agens*, and so become *Intelligible*, then are receiv'd into the *Intellectus Passivus*, and then are *actually understood*. This certainly is either very  
pro-



profound sense, or very profound nonsense, one of the two, and is rather like the *Anatomical* Account how the *Chyle* is turn'd into *Blood*, than like a *Metaphysical* account of the way of understanding. But that this Hypothesis cannot be true, our Author shews from the impossibility of Objects sending forth such Species, which he proves first from the *Impenetrability* of *Bodies*, Which must needs hinder that these Species which are nothing else but *Corporeal effluvia*, should possess the same *Ubi*, which yet must be, if, by them Objects are render'd visible, because the whole Medium, and every part of it, must be supposed full of them.

## IX.

This he proves, Secondly, from the *change or variation* of the Species. For 'tis most certain that the nearer the Object, the greater it shews. But now what should afterwards diminish this Species, and what is become of those parts whereof it consisted, when it appear'd greater? and what is it that so suddenly augments it, when 'tis beheld through a *Telescope*?

## X.

The same he proves further from the consideration of a *perfect Cube*, all the Species of whose sides are unequal, and yet the *sides themselves* are equally square. And Lastly, he censures it as an unconceivable supposition, that a Body should continually send forth Species every where, so as to fill every Point of such vast spaces, and yet not be *sensibly* diminish'd. This first Hypothesis therefore cannot be true.

## XI.

The second is, that our Mind has a Power of Producing these Ideas. This he also shews to be

false

false from the Absurdity that would thence follow, which is, that Man would then be able to Create. The consequence he proves by shewing that these Ideas are *Real Beings*, because they have real Properties, and differ one from another, and represent things really different. And that they are also *Spiritual Beings*, and that then Man would be able to Create more Noble Entities than the *Material World*, which is the workmanship of God.

## XII.

Our Author further shews that our Mind would not *use* this Creative Power, though She had it, from the *Instance* of a *Painter*. For as a Painter, though never so skilful, cannot represent a Creature which he never saw, and whereof he has no Idea; so a Man cannot form the Idea of an Object, unless he first knows it, that is, unless he has an Idea of it, which does not depend upon his own Will. Now if he already has the Idea of that Object, certainly he knows it, and then it is to no purpose for him to form again a *new* Idea of it. This Power therefore of Producing Ideas is given to Man in vain, therefore it ought not to be given, therefore this second Hypothesis is not true.

## XIII.

The third is, that God produces these Ideas, either with the Mind, or whenever we think of any Object. That this cannot be true as to the first part, he shews from the *Infinite number* of Ideas which must be supposed in proportion to the Infinite number of things, which he exemplifies in *Mathematical figures*, and the *Combinations* thence arising. It is not in the first place proba-

ble that God should create so many things with every Soul : But Secondly, suppose he should, and the Mind, were a *Magazine* of all manner of Ideas, yet 'twould be an invincible Difficulty to shew how the Mind among such an Infinite number of Ideas, should be able, and that so readily, to pick out those which it has occasion for. It ought not therefore to be said that Ideas are *Created with us*.

## XIV.

And there is as little ground to suppose that God does every moment produce in us as many several Ideas, as we conceive things. For besides that this has already been sufficiently overthrown in the other, 'tis further to be consider'd, that we must then always actually have in us the Ideas of all things, seeing that at all times we can will to think of all things : Which we could not do if we had not already a *confuse* Perception of them, that is, unless an Infinite number of Ideas were continually before our Minds. For we cannot be willing to think of that whereof we have *no* Idea. But we cannot have all this Infinity of Ideas at once in our selves, therefore this third Hypothesis is not true.

## XV.

The fourth is that the Mind needs no other thing but *it self* for the Perception of Objects, and that by Contemplating *it self* and her own Perfections, She can perceive all *External* Objects. This is the boldest Assertion of all, and is full of *Impiety* as well as *Absurdity*. They that will maintain this must be obliged to say that the Mind of Man has in it self the Perfections of all things, since it cannot see in it self what it *has* not

not in it self, and then they would do well to consider whether this be not to make a *God* of the *Soul*; For 'tis *God* only who has in himself the Perfections of all things, and who therefore sees by his own *Light*.

## XVI.

Having thus overthrown these four Hypotheses concerning the Mode of our understanding, Our most ingenious Author proceeds to the remaining one, *that we see all things in God*. Which though it be sufficiently establish'd in the overthrow of the rest, yet he goes on to a more immediate and direct proof of it. In order to which he premises two *Postulatus* which he had before prov'd, First, that *God* has in himself the Ideas of all things. This he had before concluded from *Gods* creating all things, which he could not do without having in himself the Ideas of all things. And this I have also demonstrated in my fifth Contemplation, by a distinct Argument taken from the being of *Necessary and Eternal Truths*. The second *Postulatum* is, that *God* is intimately by his Presence united to our Minds, so that *God* may be said to be the *Place of Spirits*, as *Space* is the *Place of Bodies*. These two things being suppos'd, it is most certain that the Mind may see all things in *God*, if *God* will be pleas'd to display these Ideas to her, there being then nothing to hinder it. And that 'tis the Will and Pleasure of *God* so to do, rather than create an Infinite number of Ideas in every Mind, he thus proves:

## XVII.

First, from the *general Oeconomy of the universe*, wherein 'tis observable that *God* never does that by *difficult* ways, which may be done by *simple* and

*easy* ways: That is, God never does any thing *in vain*, and without Cause: When therefore God may by himself open and exhibit to us all things barely by willing that we should see those Ideas which are in him, 'tis no way probable that to obtain the *same* end, he should produce such an infinite Multitude of Ideas as are necessary to that variety and multiplicity of Knowledge, that is in all Created Minds.

## XVIII.

This Mode of Intelligence our Author further recommends, by considering that by this way Created Minds are placed in the *greatest dependence* upon God that can possibly be. For upon this Hypothesis we cannot only see nothing but what God will let us see, but we can also see nothing but what God *exhibits* to us to be seen. Neither can our Minds be said sufficiently to depend upon God in all its operations, if they are supposed to have all that is necessary for action: that is, to have in themselves the Ideas of all things always present.

## XIX.

This again he more strongly inforces by an Argument taken from the *Manner* of our Minds *perceiving* all things. For we all find by certain experience that when we are minded to think of any particular thing, we first cast our eyes about upon all Beings, and then at last, adhere to the consideration of that Object, which we intended to think upon. Now 'tis past all question that we cannot desire to see any Object, but we must see it already, although *Confusely*, and after a *general* kind of a way. So that since we can desire to see all Objects, now this, now that, hence it

will certainly follow, that all Beings are Present to our minds. But now all Beings cannot any other way be present to the mind, but because God is present to it, who in the Simplicity of his Being comprehends all beings. The same may be further confirm'd from the Perception of *Universals*. Which the mind could not well be supposed able to represent, unless it saw all Beings included in *One*. For since every *Created* thing is an *Individual*, no one can say that he perceives any thing *Created*, when he perceives, suppose, a *Triangle* in *general*. This well deserves to be considered.

## XX.

Again our Ingenious Author argues from the *Idea* which we have of *Infinite*. For 'tis plain that we *perceive* *Infinite*, though we do not *comprehend* it, and that our mind has a very *Distinct* *Idea* of God, which it could not have but by its union *with* God. Since 'tis absurd to suppose that the *Idea* of God should be from any thing that is *Created*.

## XXI.

He further Considers that the Mind has not only an *Idea* of *Infinite*, but that it also has it *before* it has any *Idea* of *finite*. For we conceive *Infinite* Being, barely by conceiving *Being*, without considering whether it be *finite* or *infinite*. But now to conceive any *finite* Being, we must *detract* something from that *general* Notion of Being, which by consequence must be *Antecedent*. Our mind therefore perceives nothing but *in* the *Idea* which it has of *Infinite*. And this *Idea* is so far from being form'd from a *Confuse* heaping together of the *Ideas* of *special* Beings, as Philo-

sophers commonly pretend, that all those Special Ideas are nothing else but *Participations* from the general Idea of *Infinite*. Even as God does not hold his Being from the Creatures, but all Creatures subsist only by him.

## XXII.

He adds one Argument more which he thinks will go for Demonstration, with those who are used to Abstract ways of Reasoning. It is impossible that God in any of his actions should have any *Principal End* different from *himself*. This is a Common Notion with every Attentive Thinker. And the Scripture suffers us not to doubt but that God made all things for himself. It is necessary therefore that not only our Natural Love, that is, the motion which he produces in us, should tend towards himself, but that moreover that *Knowledge and Light*, which he bestows upon our mind should open and exhibit to us something that is in *himself*. For whatsoever comes from God cannot be for any other besides God. If God should Create a Mind and give it the Sun, suppose, for its Idea, or immediate Object of Knowledge, God would then make that Mind for the Sun, and not for himself.

## XXIII.

God therefore cannot make a mind to know his Works, unless that mind do in some manner see God when it sees his Works; so that I may venture to say, that if we did not some way or other see God, we should see nothing at all. Even as if we did not love God; that is, if God did not continually impress upon us the love of good in general, we should love nothing at all. For since this love is the same with our Will, we can-

not love or will any thing without him, since we cannot love Particular goods but by determining towards those goods that motion of Love which God gives us towards himself. We love therefore nothing but by that necessary love by which we are moved towards God, and we see nothing but by that Natural Knowledge which we have of God. And all those *Special Ideas* which we have of the *Creatures*, are nothing else but *Limitations* of the Idea of the *Creator*, as all the motion of our *Will* towards the *Creatures* are nothing else but *Determinations* of that motion which is toward the *Creator*.

## XXIV.

He appeals last of all to *Scripture*, which in divers places gives abundant confirmation to this Hypothesis. As when we are said, *not to be sufficient of our selves, to think any thing as of our selves,* 2 Cor. 3. 5. but that *our sufficiency is of God.* Again, God is said to have shewn unto the *Gentiles what might be known of him.* Again, God is call'd, the *father of lights.* God is also said, by the *Psalmist, to teach man Knowledge.* Lastly, He is said, to be the *true light, which enlightens every man that comes into the world.* Rom. 1. 19. Jam. 1. 17. Joh. 1. 9.

## XXV.

From all which, he concludes, that *God is the Intelligible World, or the Place of Spirits,* as the *Material World is the place of Bodies.* That these *Spirits* receive their *Modifications, or Sensations,* from his *Power,* and find their *Idea's* in his *Wisdom,* and by his *Love* are moved by all orderly motions; and that in God we have our *Life, our Motion, and our Being.* According to that of *St. Paul, He is not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being.* Act. 17. 28.



## XXVI.

And thus in as short a compass as I could compass it, have I given a summary account of what the excellent Monsieur *Malebranche* has at large delivered upon this Theory, of our seeing all things in God. I shall now further establish it by some other considerations of my own.

## XXVII.

That all our Intellectual Perception is by Ideas, that is not by the immediate presence of things themselves, but by something that immediately and immediately represents them to our mind, is a thing plain in it self, and by all so acknowledged. And that all the Idea's of things with their respective habitudes and relations are in God, I have abundantly proved; and also to the manner explained in my Contemplation of the *Divine Omniscience*. The thing now to be consider'd is, whether we do not see and know whatever we see and know in God; that is, whether those Idea's which are in God, be not the very Idea's which we see, and the immediate Object of our Knowledge and Perception.

## XXVIII.

That it is so, besides what Monsieur *Malebranche* has offered upon this Argument, I further prove by considering, first, That since Knowledge is Comprehension of Truth, if the Truth which I comprehend be in God, and in him only, then I must be said to see and know whatever I see and know in God. This is a plain and easie consequence. And that the Truth which I comprehend is in God only, I thus make out.

## XXIX.

The nature of Truth consists in a certain mental

tual respect or habitude of simple Essences one to another. But these relations which I comprehend, and which are the same with *Truth*, are not verified of the simple Essences, as they are in their *External* and *Natural subsistencies*, but as they are in the *Divine Idea's*. I deny not but that there may be relation between things in their *natural subsistencies*, but I say that is not the relation which I *primely* and *directly* behold when I contemplate *Truth*. For, first, things according to their *Natural subsistencies* are *Temporary*, and once were not, but the relation which I behold is *Eternal*, and was from everlasting; and consequently cannot be the relation of things according to their subsistence in *Nature*. Again, the Essences of things, as to their *Natural* subsistence, may *cease* to be, but the relation which I behold is *Immutable* and *Immortal*, and will be ever the same. Again, things as they are in *Nature*, are not, even while they are, according to that *exactness* according to which we discern some certain relations to belong to them. Thus for instance, when I define a right Line to be that which lies equally between its two Points, is there, can there be any such Line in *Nature* to which this relation may belong? This relation therefore is not the relation of any *Line* in *Nature*, but of a *Line* in *Idea*. And so 'tis in all other instances; the relations which we behold are not the relations of any *Natural*, but of *Ideal Entities*. These are the things which are properly related, other things are so only by *accident* and *reductively* as they come under these. And 'tis the relation of these which we properly discern, and which are the *prime, direct, and immediate* ob-

object of our Perception, the relations of other things come under a *secondary discernment*, and they are only so far beheld, as they are beheld in these.

## XXX.

And this is what the Schools themselves must of necessity come to, if they would but attend to the consequence of what they affirm, when they say, That *Science is not of Singulars, but of Universal and Abstract Natures*. For where are these Universal Natures? Not in this *Ectypal World*. Whatever is here, is *Singular, this or that*. It must be therefore in the *Ideal or Architypal World*, that is, in the Divine Nature, as exhibitivè of that which is created, where these Universal Natures, which are the proper objects of Science, are to be found. And consequently, 'tis in God that we know all the Truth, which we know.

## XXXI.

And this very Notion *Aquinas* had once plainly light upon, however he came afterwards to lose it. For, says he, in express terms, *It is necessary to say that the human Soul knows all things in their Eternal Reasons, by the participation of which we know all things. For that Intellectual Light which is in us, is nothing else but a participated similitude of that increated Light in which the Eternal Reasons are contain'd*. This is almost as plain an acknowledgment of our seeing all things in God as one would wish; and differs little or nothing from that celebrated Definition *Plato* gives of Knowledge, which he calls, *A Participation of Ideas*.

Part. 1. Q.  
84. Ar. 5.

## XXXII.

But to proceed, if the Truth which we see be not in God, I would fain know whence has it its

Unity

*Unity and Identity, its Steadiness and Immutability, its Everlastingness and Perpetuity?* Whence is it that 'tis alike discern'd by *different minds*, and by the *same mind at different times*? We have nothing in our *selves*, but what is flux and mutable, and the things without us are as mutable and uncertain as we our selves. Again, whence is it that Truth is present in all *places*, and that *independently* upon our *thinking or knowing*? For, suppose all the Men and Angels in the World should suspend thinking, yet the existence of Truth would not be thereby suspended, but remain as it was before. For by thinking we do not *make* Truth, but only perceive it as it is in *it self*, by attending to that Light which shines upon us, and is intimately present with us. Truth therefore will exist and be always the same, whether we think or no; which is a plain Argument that tho' it be *in us*, yet 'tis nothing of *ours*, nor is it at all dependent upon our Understandings, but only upon his who is *necessarily*, and is in *all places*, and is *Truth it self*.

## XXXIII.

This conclusion may be further inferr'd from the *Permanency and Immutable Stability* of simple Ideas. I find in my mind certain Idea's of a fix'd and unalterable Nature, such as I can neither add any thing to, or at all diminish from. Thus for instance, the Idea of a *Triangle* has a determinate and immutable Nature, such as is not in my power any way to alter. I can, indeed, cease to think of a *Triangle*, and convert my mind to the speculation of some other Figure. But whenever I do think of a *Triangle*, I cannot help representing it to my mind after one and the same de-

determinate way. Which is a certain Argument that this Idea is not of my own raising or forming, for then it would be *Arbitrary*, and I might vary it at pleasure ; but that 'tis an *absolute Nature*, distinct from, and independent on my Understanding, and, indeed, that 'tis no other than the *Divine Essence* it self, after a special mode of *Exhibition* or *Imitability* : For nothing but God himself is *absolutely Immutable*. He only being that *Father of Lights*, in whom is no varying, nor shadow of turning.

## XXXIV.

This, again, may be further argued, from our *desire* of Knowledge, and from the *manner* of our attaining to it. As to the desire of Knowledge, I remark this, That among all the things which are *knowable*, there is not one which I may not, nay, which I do not actually desire to know. But now I cannot have any desire of that whereof I have no manner of Knowledge. For desire proceeds from Knowledge, and consequently presupposes it. I must therefore be supposed to have already *some* Knowledge of all that I desire to know ; that is, I must have a *confuse* Knowledge of that which I desire to know *clearly* and *distinctly*. And therefore since I desire to know, or may desire to know every thing clearly and distinctly. I must be allowed to have a *confuse* Knowledge of every thing. But, now, how can this be, but by my having all things actually present to my mind ? And how can this be, but by my having a *confuse glance* of that Being in whom are all things, and who is *All* ?

## XXXV.

Then as to the *manner* of our attaining to Know-

Knowledge, 'tis a thing in the first place worth considering, How a Child comes to learn his first Language. To know a Language, is to know that such a word is to go as a sign for such a thing. Now of words there are some to which the thing that answers is *material* and *sensible*. Others, again, there are, to which the things that answer, are *purely Intellectual*. This premised, I demand how a Child comes to understand the first Language which he learns? You will say, by frequent hearing the word repeated, when at the same time the thing is pointed to, he begins at length to collect that such a word is to go for such a thing; and so to call a Table, a Table, and a Stool, a Stool. True, this serves well enough to explain how we may learn the meaning of such words to which something *sensible* answers. But this won't at all help us out in accounting for the understanding words which signify *pure Intellectual Notions*. For these cannot be *pointed* at when I hear the word, as in the other case, because not *present*, nor *sensible*, and therefore should the word be never so often said over to me, I might indeed grow familiar with the *sound*, but I should never be able thence to understand that this word is to be joyned as a *sign* to such an *Idea*. As for instance, should I hear this word *Vertue* repeated to me daily, I should in a little time come to be acquainted with the *sound*, so as to know it again from any other *sound*; but sure were I to hear it to Eternity, I should never thence be instructed among all those *Intellectual Idea's* which I have, which was signifi'd by that word, neither of them being to be pointed to when I heard the *sound*. And yet we find by experience

perience that Children do make a shift to find out this, and that they learn the meaning of such words whose Idea's are *Intellectual*, almost as soon as they do the *other*, and that at an Age when their *observation* is next to none at all. But how they come to do this is an amazing thing to consider. And truly I have no other way to solve the difficulty, but by supposing that as often as they hear such words to which the Notions that answer are *purely Intellectual*, and consequently be not pointed at when the word is spoken: God then, who is never wanting in *necessaries*, supplies the part of the *Teacher*, by exhibiting such a part of the *Ideal World*, to the mind of the Child, as is signified by such an arbitrary sign. And this *exhibition* being thus occasionally vouchsafed by God whenever such words are repeated, has the same effect to make the Child understand the meaning of words, whose Notions are *purely Intellectual*, as pointing to the sensible Object has to make him know the meaning of words which signify things *material* and *sensible*.

## XXXVI.

Pass we next from knowledge of *words* to knowledge of *things*. This knowledge we get and increase by *Study*. Now Study is nothing else, but a close application of mind to the speculation of Truth. The more intent we are in our view of Truth, the more we discover of it. And not only so, but the more intently we speculate it, the more uniform we are in our judgments about it. The more we *think*, the more we come to *agree* in our *thoughts*. Now this plainly argues, that Truth is one absolute and separate Nature, independing upon our Understandings; and, yet  
wical,

withal, intimately and constantly present to them : For, otherwise, how could it be thus in our power at any time to apply our minds to the speculation of it ? Now, what can this one independent, and ever-present Nature be, but God ? To know *Truth* therefore is to know God : and *Divinity* is a larger *Study* than we are aware of.

## XXXVII.

Further, I consider, that since God has made Man after *his own Image and Likeness*, 'tis highly rational to believe that we imitate him in our *Understandings* ; Understanding being one of the principal parts of Man. And how can we duly imitate him in our Understandings, unless we be supposed to know and perceive after the same general way that God knows and perceives ? But now the mode of the Divine Understanding, is by consulting the *Ideal World*, that is, *himself as* variously imitable and exhibitiv of things. Thus 'tis most certain God knew and perceived before the Production of this *Ættypal* World, there being then no other mode of Perception imaginable. And thus he must be supposed to perceive *now and ever*, there being *no varying or shadow of turning* in God, much less from *better to worse*, as it would be, should God be supposed *before* the Creation to know by and in himself, and *afterwards* by any created or foreign Ideas. It is therefore congruous to suppose that as God knows and perceives all things in himself, so Man who is after the Divine image knows and perceives all things in God.

## XXXVIII.

Again, 'tis highly rational to believe that we know and Perceive *Now* after the same manner, tho'



Psal. 36.

tho' not in the same degree, as we shall *hereafter* in Heaven. As the Eye sees after the same manner, tho' not in the same measure, by night as it does by day. For the state of Glory is not the *Destruction*, but only the *Perfection* and *Elevation* of the state of Nature. But now 'tis certain this shall be the mode of our Vision and Perception *hereafter*, we shall then see all things in God, for says the Psalmist, *With thee is the well of life, and in thy light shall we see light.* And therefore we may with reason conclude that this is the mode of our *Present Intelligence*, and that now also we see *Light*, in the *Light of God*. And accordingly says the Apostle, *now we see thro' a Glass darkly, but then face to face* : Where observe that our *Present Vision* does not differ from our *Future*, as to the *Object*, but only as to the *Degree of Charity*. God is the *Object* of both, only now he is seen thro' a *Glass*, that is, thro' the Veil of our *Mortal Flesh*, whereas then the Veil shall be remov'd, and our vision of him shall be *Clear* and *Perfect*.

## XXXIX.

Lastly, I consider that I always think of Being *in general*. Particular Beings indeed I think of or not think of at Pleasure, but Being in general is ever before my mind, and I cannot possibly remove it from me. For there is the same Proportion in our *Understanding* that is in our *Love*. There is a variety and vicissitude in our love of *Particular* goods, sometimes we love them, sometimes we do not love them, sometimes we love this, sometimes that, sometimes more, and sometimes less; but our love of good in *general* is necessary, constant, and uniform. And there

is the same measure in our *Thinking*. *Particular* Beings we think of by intervals and with variety. But we always and uncessantly think of Being in *general*. And when we think of *Particular* Beings, we don't so much depart from *Being in general*, as confine and determin our minds to some *certain* Perfections of it. Nay, when we think that we think of *nothing*, our mind is then most full and pregnant of wandering, Indeterminate, Indefinite Ideas of Being in general. This I evidently experiment in my self, and I question not that whoever attends to the operations of his mind will find the same: Now I demand whence should this come to pass that I am thus necessarily determin'd at all times, and in all Places to think of Being in general, but only from this, that Being in general is inseparably united to my mind, and intimately present to it, as being *always*, and *every where*.

## XL.

But now Being in general is the same with *God*, as has been shewn in the Former part. If therefore Being in general be united to my Soul, then *God* is united to my Soul. And not only so, but also more intimately united to it than any thing else can be, because there is nothing else that I necessarily think of, whereas I do necessarily think of *God*. And if *God* be so intimately united to my Soul, how can I otherwise conclude but that 'tis in him that I see all that I see? For in what else can I see it, nothing being so intimately Presential to me as *God*? And in what else need I see it, *God* having in himself the Ideas of all things, as was before proved.

Now us to *Scripture-Authority*, besides what *Monsieur Malebranche* has alledged, I further offer to be consider'd, First, that God is not only said to enlighten our minds, and all our *Illumination* is every where ascribed to him, but it is also particularly ascribed to the *second Hypostasis* of the Blessed Trinity, who is  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\Theta$ , the word or inward conception of God, or the Ideal World. Thus in the 8th of the *Proverbs*, there is described a Substantial Wisdom (which can be no other but the Divine  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\Theta$ , who is the Wisdom of the Father) concerning which it is said, *The Lord possess'd me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the Beginning (and so St. John, In the Beginning was the word) or ever the earth was: When there were no Depths I was brought forth (there's the eternal Generation) when there were no Fountains abounding with Water. Before the Mountains were settled; before the Hills was I brought forth. While as yet he had not made the Earth, nor the Fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the World. When he prepared the Heavens I was there, when he set a Compass upon the face of the Deep. When he established the Clouds above, when he Strengthen'd the foundations of the Deep. When he gave to the Sea his Deep, that the Waters should not pass his Commandment, when he appointed the Foundations of the Earth. This was I by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him. This I think will readily be acknowledg'd to be a plain and graphical Description of the Divine  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\Theta$  or Ideal World. Now of this same Divine  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\Theta$  it is also said in the same Chapter, *Counsel is**

*Min.*

*Mine, and sound Wisdom, I am understanding. By Ver. 14. me Kings reign, and Princes decree Justice. By me Princes rule, and Nobles, even all the Judges of the Earth. And again, v. 20. I lead in the way of Righteousness, in the midst of the Paths of Judgment. And again chap. 9. says the same substantial Wisdom, Who so is simple, let him turn in hither, ( that is, to the Intellectual Feast which she is there said to have prepared ) and to him that wants understanding she says, Come eat of my Bread, and drink of the Wine which I have mingled.*

## XLII.

By this it is as plain as any thing can be, that is figuratively expressed, that all our illumination proceeds from the Divine  $\alpha\gamma\gamma$ , the substantial wisdom of God. But St. John speaks more plainly ; *This is the true light which enlightens every man that comes into the world.* Now true Light, is here the same as only Light, and implies that all other pretended Lights, are false ones. Again says our Lord, *I am the light of the world.* And, *I am the way, the truth, and the life.* And again says our Lord in his Prayer, *Sanctify them thro' thy truth, thy word is truth :* Which is not meant of the written Word, but of the substantial and eternal Word, as appears from the Context. Lastly, the Apostle says expressly of this Divine Word, *that he is made unto us Wisdom.* Which is 1 Cor. 30. exactly according to our Hypothesis that we see all things in the Ideal World, or Divine  $\alpha\gamma\gamma$ .

## XLIII.

I might add a great deal more to this purpose, but I think that from these considerations, joyn'd with those of Mr. Malebranche, 'tis clear, even to Demonstration, that Man is not his own Light,

or a Light to himself, and also that no other Creature can be a Light to him, but that he sees and knows all things in the Divine  $\lambda\gamma\theta$ , or Ideal World, which is that *true Light within him* so much talkt of by Enthusiasts, who by a kind of *blind Parturiency* of mind have *confusedly glanc'd* at what we have here more *distinctly explain'd*: That all our Light and Illumination proceeds wholly from him who at first said, *let there be light*; that we see so much of *Truth* as we see of *God*; that the Ideas which are in God are the very Ideas which we see, and that the Divine  $\lambda\gamma\theta$  is our *Wisdom*, as well as the *Wisdom of his Father*. So absolutely necessary is the *Doctrin of Ideas*, when rightly stated to the explaining the Mode both of *Divine* and *Human Knowledge*; without which I shall venture to affirm that they can neither of them be *explained* or *understood*.

### *The Use of this to Devotion.*

SInce then God is that *Intelligible Light*, in which we see and know, and since we see and know so much *Truth* as God is pleased to discover to us of *himself*, we may hence collect to the advantage of Devotion, First, What little Reason the Wifest of us all have to be proud of our *understanding* and *knowledge*. We are generally more apt to be proud of our *Understandings* than of any thing else about us; but this we have least reason to be proud of, there being according to the preceeding Hypothesis no other difference between a Wise Man and a Fool, but only that God is pleased by his *in-dwelling Ideas* to illuminate one more than another, or to discover more of

of himself to one than he does to another. And if so, then to be proud of my knowledge, is to be proud that I am more dependent upon God than another Man is, which indeed is a very proper Argument for *Humility*, but a very Absurd one for *Pride*.

Hence again we may collect how reasonable 'tis that we should Bless, Praise and Adore God as the sole Author of all our Light and Knowledge, as our immediate Teacher and Instructor, and that to him we should always address our selves in Prayer for further Illumination.

Lastly, 'twill hence follow that we ought always most chearfully to attend to the Dictates of this Light within us, that we ought to look upon all Truth as Divine Revelation, and on our Reason as a Divine Monitor, as the *Angel of God's Presence*. And accordingly to be very careful how we transgress any of his clear Dictates, that we grieve not this *Angel* lest he smite us, that we do nothing against him, lest he forsake us.

### *The Aspiration.*

MY God, my Light, *what is Man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of Man that thou so regardest him?* But much more, what is Man that he should so regard *himself?* that he should regard himself for that which is least of all his own, his Knowledge and Wisdom? For, O God, we are not a Light to our selves, but 'tis thou, O God, art our Light, and in thy Light do we see Light.

O my *Wonderful Counsellour*, with what Humility and Poverty of spirit ought I to reflect upon the

the richest Endowments of my Mind, since I see only by thy Light, and depend upon thee for what I *Know*, as much as for what I am? And how unworthy should I be of thy Divine Light, should I be puffed up through the *Abundance* of this thy Revelation?

- Not unto me therefore, O my God, my Light, not unto me, but to thy greatness and goodness be the Praise and the Glory. For 'tis thy Word, thy Eternal Word, that is a *Lantern unto my feet, and a light unto my paths.* The Lord is my light and my salvation, and it is he that teacheth me Knowledge. I will therefore thank the Lord for giving me warning, my reins also chasten me in the night-season.
- Pfal. 119.    *be the Praise and the Glory. For 'tis thy Word,*  
 Psal. 27.    *thy Eternal Word, that is a Lantern unto my feet,*  
 Psal. 16.    *and a light unto my paths. The Lord is my light and my salvation,*

- and it is he that teacheth me Knowledge. I will therefore thank the Lord for giving me warning, my reins also chasten me in the night-season.*
- Lighten my Darkness I beseech thee, O Father of Lights, and shine upon me more and more with the *Brightness of thy glory.* O send me thy light and thy truth, that they may lead me, and bring me unto thy holy Hill, and to thy dwelling.
- Heb. 1.    *Lighten my Darkness I beseech thee, O Father of Lights,*  
 Psal. 43.    *and shine upon me more and more with the Brightness of thy glory.*  
 Psal. 119.    *O send me thy light and thy truth, that they may lead me, and bring me unto thy holy Hill, and to thy dwelling.*
- Shew the light of thy countenance upon thy servant, and teach me thy Statutes.* O let the Angel of thy Presence go always before me in this my Pilgrimage, and grant that I may alway attend and give heed to his Counsel and Direction, that in walking in thy Light here, I may for ever live and for ever rejoyce in the full and open Light of thy Countenance hereafter, *Amen.*

## Contemplation III.

*Of Man consider'd as an Amorous Creature.*

## I.

**T***Ruth and Good* employ the whole Capacity of Man, who seems to be purely designed and made for the *contemplation* of the former, and for the *desire* and *fruition* of the latter. Having therefore consider'd Man as an *Intelligent Creature*, or as he is a *Contemplator of Truth*, I shall now proceed to consider him as an *Amorous Creature*, or as he is a *desirer of Good*.

## II.

The management of this Subject engages me upon the consideration of these four things. *First*, What Love or Desire is, or wherein the general Nature of it does consist ? *Secondly*, That Love or Desire is in Man, or that Man is an *Amorous Being*. *Thirdly*, Whence Man has this Affection, or what is the proper cause of it. *Fourthly*, and *Lastly*, After what manner this Affection has it self, or how it stands proportion'd to that cause.

## III.

Now as to the *First*, I say that the general nature of Love consists in a *motion of the Soul towards Good*. But this I have sufficiently explained in a distinct Treatise upon this occasion, to *Vid. Theory* which I shall chuse rather to refer my Reader, *and Regulation of Love.* than to trouble him or my self with needless repetitions.



## IV.

As to the *Second*, That there is such a motion in Man, I need say no more, but that we are intimately conscious of it, as much as we are of the motion of our Heart, or Lungs, or of any other Physical Impression in or about us. And therefore that I shall further insist upon shall be the two last things: *First*, What is the proper cause of this motion in Man. And, *Secondly*, After what peculiar manner this motion has it felt or stands proportioned to that cause. To these two Enquiries I shall confine my present Contemplation.

## V.

As to the cause of this motion in Man, which we call Love or Desire, I consider that it must be the same that is the cause of all the Physical Motion in the Universe. Now Physical Motion is resolv'd into a double cause, an *occasional cause* and an *efficient cause*. The occasional cause of Physical Motion is *Emptiness* or *Vacuity*. For in that which is *absolutely full* there can be no Motion because of the Impenetrability of Bodies. The efficient Cause of Physical Motion is either particular or universal. The particular is, the pressure or impulse of particular Bodies one against another. The universal is, no other than God himself, who in the Creation of the World (as the *Cartesian* Philosophy rightly supposes) dispensed a certain Portion of Motion and Rest to Matter, which he still preserves the same by his Almighty Power. So that if one part of Matter cease to be moved, so much motion as was in that is transferred to another part: And if the motion of one decreases or be diminished, it is compensated

pensated in another. And so the same measure of motion is always conserved in the Universe. And unless God be supposed to be the Author of Motion, 'twill be impossible to give any account of the Original of it. For neither can Bodies move themselves, nor can they be moved by one another on to Infinity. We must therefore at last come to a *first Mover unmoved*, which is God. And so *Aristotle* calls God, τὸ πρῶτον κινῶν ἀκίνητον, *the first Mover unmoved*.

## VI.

And thus in the same Proposition, the motion of Love is also resolvable into a double cause, an occasional Cause, and an efficient Cause. The occasional Cause of this motion, as of the other, is *Emptiness* or *Vacuity*. For Love or Desire is founded upon *Indigence* and *Self-insufficiency* of the Soul, which having not within it self enough to content it, is forced to go out of it self for supplies. And so *Aristotle* in his *Ethics*, ἀναπλήρωσις ἢ ἐνδεΐα ἢ ἰπιδυμία, *Desire is the fulfilling of Indigence*. And accordingly we find that the more weak and indigent any Person is, still the more abounding in desire. Thus Children are more profuse in their Desires than Adult Persons, Women than Men, and the Sick more than those who are in Health. This is well shadowed forth in *Jotham's Parable*, wherein the *Bramble* is represented as more *ambitious* than either the *Olive-tree*, *Fig-tree*, or the *Vine*. For he presently accepted of that Empire which they had all declined. Where there is no Indigence there is no room for Desire; and accordingly God, who is an absolutely full Being, can no more admit of desire, than a place that is absolutely full can admit of motion.

## VII.

## VII.

As to the *efficient Cause* of this Moral Motion, it is also double as in Physical Motion. It is either Particular or Universal. The particular efficient Cause, are particular Goods, whether Sensual or Intellectual; which act upon the Soul, and answer to the pressure or impulse of particular Bodies in Natural Motion. The Universal efficient Cause, is the Universal Good, or God, whom we suppose to have imprinted a certain stock of Motion upon the *Intellectual* World, as he did upon the *Natural*. Which he also conserves and maintains by his Omnipotence, as he does the other.

## VIII.

For, I consider, that there is the same Necessity of a *first Mover* in Moral, as there is in Natural Motions: And upon the very same grounds. But now 'tis impossible that there should be any other *first Mover* besides God. And therefore whatever intermediate Causes there may be of this motion, it must at last be resolved into an impression of God upon our Souls, whom therefore I call the *Universal efficient cause of Love*.

## IX.

And so much for the Cause of this Motion in Man. I come now to consider the last Enquiry, namely, after what peculiar manner this motion has it self, or how it stands proportioned to its cause. I do not mean its *occasional* cause, that being not so proper a *cause* as a condition, but its *efficient* cause. Now this being double, Particular and Universal Good; the question in more explicate terms will be, after what peculiar manner our Love stands affected or proportioned to Particular and Universal Good. X.

## X.

Now in answer to this, I consider, first, That since God is the *first Mover* in the motion of Love, he must necessarily determine this motion toward himself, or make himself the term of this motion, and the only term too; it being impossible that God should act for any end different from himself. Whence it follows, that Universal good, or good in general, is the only good to which we are *directly* and *properly* moved by God.

## XI.

Hence again it follows, that good in common, or God, must be the Primary and Adequate Term or Object of Love. This being the only good to which we are directly moved by God. I say *directly*, for God moves us to particular goods only by moving us to good in general, which is not to move us to them *directly*, but by *accident* and *indirectly*. God cannot move us *directly* to any thing but himself, that is, to universal good, or good in general, which therefore must be the Primary and Adequate Term or Object of Love.

## XII.

And this we *sensibly experiment* as well as *rationaly conclude*. For 'tis plain that we are conscious to our selves of our loving good as good, or good according to its common Nature, before we love this or that good in particular. And we are further conscious, that when we do love any particular good, 'tis only for the sake of the Universal good. We love it only because we find in it something of the common Nature of good, and the more we find of that, the more we love it. So that 'tis by that love whereby we love good  
in

in common, that we love any particular good. And were it not for this Universal good we should be able to love nothing. Which by the way is a plain argument of the *real existence* of such *Universal good*, and consequently that *there is a God*.

## XIII.

For, indeed, to speak out in short what we would have, as we understand all things in God, so 'tis in God we love whatever we love. And when we *understand*, the Divine Ideas are those which we directly and properly perceive, and Created Beings are only so far perceiv'd as they are of a similar nature with those Ideas, and so virtually contain'd in them. So when we Love universal good, good in common, or God, is that which we directly and properly love, and Created goods, or particular goods are only so far loved as as they resemble and participate of the nature of that universal good, to which the motion of our love is Directly and Primarily determined. So that *Particular goods* are as much loved in the *universal good*, as *Particular Beings* are seen and perceiv'd in the *universal Being*.

## XIV.

I further consider, that as we are determin'd to good in general *Primarily* and *Directly*, so also the motion whereby we are by God determin'd to it is *necessary, invincible and irresistible*. There is nothing in nature more necessary, no nor so necessary and invincible as that motion whereby we are carried forth to good in general. Here the Soul must not pretend to the least shadow of Liberty, having no more command over this motion, than she has over the motion of the Sun.

? Tis

'Tis not easie to conceive how *God himself* should ex this motion, but 'tis plain that *Man* cannot any way command it.

## XV.

But there is not the same necessity of Determination in our motion towards *Particular* good, I say not the same. *M. Malebranche* will allow none, but 'tis plain that *some* there is. For since we are invincibly determin'd to the Love of good in general, we must needs love good as such, and consequently in every degree of Participation, the general Reason of good being in some measure or other found in every degree of Particular good. Loving therefore good as good we are necessarily determin'd to love every degree of good, and consequently every particular good, with a *Natural Love*, so far as we consider it as good.

## XVI.

But because this Particular good is not the Greatest good, and consequently in some junctures may come into competition with a greater, hence it comes to pass that we may upon the whole have more reason to nill and refuse it, than to will and embrace it, and so are not determin'd necessarily to an *Absolute*, effectual, and thorough love of it, tho' yet we must love it as good with a *natural* love as before.

## XVII.

For 'tis impossible that we should ever *nill Good*, as we *nill Evil*, any more than we can *will Evil* as we *will Good*. But as our willing of Evil is always with a mixture of *willing*, tho' willing may in some junctures prevail, so our nilling of good is always with a mixture of *willing*, tho' in some junctures nilling may prevail: We cannot hate  
good

good with a *Pure Hatred*, tho' it be only a *lesser* good, any more than we can love evil with a *Pure Love*, tho' a *lesser* evil.

## XVIII.

Whenever therefore by the Competition of goods we are engaged to nill any particular good we do also will it at the same time. But in different respects. We will it as good, and we nill it as a lesser good; we will it *secundum quid*, according to a certain respect, and we nill it Simply and Absolutely: That is, in other words, we have *some* reason to will it, namely its proper good, in which respect we *necessarily* will it, and consequently *always*, yet we have *more* reason to nill it in the present juncture, as standing in competition with a greater good, and the stronger motive takes place as to *Absolute* and *Efficient* love or choice.

## XIX.

This I cannot better illustrate than by the example of *Weights* in a *Ballance*. For tho' that Scale which has most weight in it, weighs *down*, yet we must needs be allow'd that the other Scale does so weigh and press *downward*, tho' not effectually, because otherwise as much weight would be required to make it weigh effectually down as it were quite empty. And thus 'tis in the present case. Tho' for the Prevalency of Reasons in some junctures the Scale may weigh down for the liking of good, yet the other Scale also presses tho' not effectually. And this is what the School term a *Velleity*, or Natural Inclination. And with this Velleity, or natural Inclination, we are necessarily determin'd to love every Particular good; but we are not necessarily determin'd

termin'd to love it absolutely and effectually, because there is no particular good, but what may come in Competition with a greater, and then there will be *more* Reason to *will* it than to *will* it, and the heaviest Scale will weigh down.

## XX.

And thus have I shewn after what peculiar manner our Love stands affected or proportion'd to Particular and Universal good. The difference consists in these two things. *Universal* good is the *Primary* and *Direct* Object of our Love, but our Love tends towards *Particular* good only *secundarily* and *indirectly*, for the sake of what it has of the Universal. Then again there is a difference as to the *Necessity* of the Determination, as well as to the *Primariness* of it. There is indeed Necessity on both sides, but not in *like manner*. We are necessarily determin'd to Love universal good *Absolutely* and *Thoroughly*. The Scale does not only *weigh* here, but *weighs down*. But we are not determin'd to love any Particular good *Absolutely* and *Thoroughly*, but only to love it with a *Natural Inclination* or *Velleity*. And to such a love of it we are as necessarily determin'd, as we are to the love of universal good; but the *Actual Choice* of it is not necessary, there being no Particular good to the *Absolute* and *effectual* love, of which we are invincibly determin'd.

*The use of this to Devotion.*

THE *Amorousness* of Humane Nature, as we have here consider'd it, contains in it many and great incitements to Devotion. For first, since the Occasional Cause of our Love is Indigence



gence and Emptiness, we have great reason to be humble and lowly in Spirit, especially considering that we are continually admonish'd of this our Indigence, as often as we are Conscience to our selves that we love.

Again, since God is the Principal Efficient Cause of Love, and the first Mover in all Moral as well as Natural Motion, it is highly reasonable that he should be principally loved by us from whom we receive our Love, and that we should be mighty careful how we pervert this *Divine Impression* to any undue object.

Again, since God moves us Directly and Primarily only to *himself*, and since universal good is therefore the *Primary* and *Direct* Object of our Love, hence it will follow that we ought always to make God the *Primary* and *Direct* Object of our Love, and that we ought to Love nothing for *self*, but only *in and for God*.

And lastly, since we are necessarily determin'd to love good in general, *Absolutely* and *Effectually*, by such a motion as we can neither *resist*, nor in any way *Command* or *Moderate*; hence it appears how highly necessary it is that we should *explicitly* fix all that Love upon God, as having all that good in him to which we aspire with a *Blind*, *Confuse* and *Indefinite*, tho' *Necessary* Appetite.

### *The Aspiration.*

**M**Y God, *My Love*, how absurd a thing is it that an *Amorous* Creature should bear Proportion to a Creature! My Love is occasion'd by my Indigence, and I cannot Love, but I am minded of that Indigence; how ill then would Pride become me, having so much reason to be humble, and the reason so continually set before me!

Divine Fountain of Love, 'tis from thee I receive all my Love, and upon whom should I place it but upon thee? The fire that descends from Heaven, where should it be spent but upon the Altar? Thou hast a *Right*, O my God to all my Love, for I cannot love thee with any Love but what is *thy own*. O then do thou Regulate this *thy own Divine Impression*, and grant I may never sin against thee, by the abuse of that Love which thou hast given me. *I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth*, for doing so much towards the guidance and Regulation of my Love, as to carry me directly only to Universal good, thereby teaching me that I ought to make thee the only *Direct* and *Primary* Object of my Love. My God, I will love as thou teachest me, the First and Direct Motion of Love shall be towards thee, and whatever I love besides thee, I will love only in and for thee.

I thank thee, also My God, for that thou hast made it so necessary for me to love universal good. Thou, O God, art this universal good, and I ought to love thee with the very same Love wherewith I love *Happiness* it self. O that I were as necessarily inclined to love thee, as I am to love *Happiness*! I do not desire to be trusted with any *Liberty* in the Love of thee. But this, my God, I cannot hope for, till I shall see thee as thou art. O let me therefore love thee to the utmost Capacity of a *Free Creature*. Thou, O God, hast set no Bounds to my love of thee, O let not me set any. My God, I do not, I love thee with all my Heart, Soul, Mind, and Strength. *Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.*

## Contemplation IV.

*Man consider'd as an Irregular Lover.*

### I.

**H**itherto we have considered Man as God made him. He was made by God, a *Creature*, an *Intelligent Creature*, and an *Amorous Creature*. The two first of which import the Perfection of God *actually participated* by him, in as much as in him he not only lives, moves and has his Being, but in him has all his *Understanding* also. The last imports in him a *tendency* to the *Divine Perfection*; which is also an *actual Perfection* of his *own Nature*, and such as God also has therein implanted. And thus far is Man wholly the *Divine Workmanship*, and carries in him the *Image* of him that made him. Let us now consider him as he has made himself, and is as it were his *own Creature*.

### II.

Now thus to consider Man, is to consider him as an *Irregular Lover*. And to do this fully, and to the purpose intended, Three things will be requisite. *First*, To shew what it is to be an *Irregular Lover*. *Secondly*, How prone and apt Man is to *Love Irregularly*. *Thirdly*, That Man himself is the Author of this proneness of his to *Irregular Love*.

### III.

In relation to the first, if it be demanded, What it is to be an *Irregular Lover*? I answer in one word, That 'tis to be a *Fool*. *Sin* and *Fool*, *Sinner* and *Fool*, are words in Scripture of a like

signification, and are indifferently used one for the other. And we are taught in the *Schools of Morality*, that every *Sinner* is *ignorant*. Πᾶσι μὲν ἁμαρτίας ἀνθρώπων, says the *Socratical Proverb*. Indeed, it has its *Birth* in *Folly*, and every step of its progress is *Folly*, and its conclusion is in *Folly*. But this will appear more distinctly from the consideration of these two things. *First*, Of the absurdity and madness of the choice which every *Irregular Lover* makes. And, *Secondly*, The error and mistake that must necessarily precede in his Judgment, before he does or can make it.

## IV.

As for the absurdity of his choice, 'tis the greatest that can be imagined. For what is it that he chuses? 'Tis to do that which he must and certainly will *repent* of, and wish he had never done, either in *this World*, for its *illness* and *usefulness*; or, in the *next*, for its *sad effects* and *consequences*. 'Tis to despise the *Authority*, *Power*, *Justice* and *Goodness* of God: 'Tis to transgress his *Commands*, which are good and equitable, and in keeping of which there is *present*, as well as *future reward*. 'Tis to act against the *Frame* of his *Rational Nature*, and the *Divine Law* of his *Mind*: 'Tis to disturb the *Order* and *Harmony* of the *Creation*, and by *Extra-lineal motions* to violate the *Sacred Interest* of *Society*. 'Tis *lastly*, to incur the *Anger* of an *Omnipotent* and *Just God*, and to hazard falling from his *Supreme Good* and the *last end* of his *Being*, and the being ruined in his *best Interest* to all *Eternity*.

## V.

All this the *Irregular Lover* partly actually incurs, and partly puts to the hazard in every

wrong motion of his Love. And for what is this? Is it for any considerable interest, for a thing that bears something of proportion, and may pretend to competition and a rival Weight in the opposite Scale of the *Ballance*? No, only for a shadow, for a trifle, for the gratification of some baser appetite, for the acquisition of some little interest, which has nothing to divert us from adhering to that which is truly our best, but only that poor advantage of being *present*, tho' at the same time its *vanity* be preferred with it.

## VI.

And now is this a choice for a *wise Man*, or a Man of *common Sense*? Nay, is it a choice for a Man in his *right Wits* to make? Were a Man to beg an Estate, would one need a better demonstration of a Man's being a Fool, than such a *procedure* as this? If therefore *absurdity* of choice be any argument of folly, the Irregular Love is certainly a very great Fool.

## VII.

But this folly will further appear if we consider, *Secondly*, the error and mistake that necessarily precede in his Judgment before he does or can make such a choice. All irregularity of Love is founded upon ignorance and mistake. For as 'tis impossible to chuse evil as evil in general, so is it no less impossible to chuse evil will any *particular kind* of evil, as evil; and consequently, 'tis impossible to will the evil of itself as such, (the Devil himself can't love sin as sin.) If therefore it be chosen, it must be chosen under the appearance of good, and it must have this appearance no otherwise than as one

sider

considered as a *lesser evil*, ( for that's the only way whereby an evil may appear good or eligible. ) And so it must be consider'd before it be chosen.

## VIII.

He therefore that chuses sin, considers it at the instant of commission, as a lesser evil. And therein consists his error and mistake. He is either *habitually* or *actually* ignorant. He either has not the habitual knowledge of all those things which should preserve him in his duty, or at least he has not the actual consideration of them. For 'tis that which must bring him to *repentance*. And 'tis impossible a Man should sin with the very same *Thoughts*, *Convictions* and *Considerations* about him, as he has when he *repents*. This I say is no more possible than for a Ballance to move two contrary ways with the same *Weight*, and in the same *Posture*. He therefore that sins, wants that consideration at least to keep him in his duty, which when he *repents*, brings him to it. And is therefore ignorant and mistaken.

## IX.

The sum of this matter is, whoever thinks sin a lesser evil, is mistaken in his judgment. But whoever commits sin, does then think it a lesser evil: Therefore whoever commits sin is mistaken in his judgment; so great is the folly of *Irregular Love*, both in reference to the absurdity of the choice, and to the error and mistake of the chuser. And so great reason has every *Irregular Lover* to take up that confession of the *Psalmist*, *So foolish was I, and ignorant: And even as a beast before thee*, Psal. 73.

## X.

Having thus considered what it is to be an *Irregular Lover*, let us now in the second place consider how prone and apt Man is to be guilty of *Irregular Love*. 'Tis the grand disadvantage of our Mortal condition, to have our Soul comforted with a *disproportionate* and *uncompliant Vehicle*, and to have her aspiring Wings pinned down to the ground. We have a mixt constitution, made up of two vastly different substances, with Appetites and Inclinations to different Objects, serving to contrary Interests, and steering to opposite Points. A compound of Flesh and Spirit, a thing between an *Angel* and a *Beast*. We lug about with us a *Body* of sin; and the Earthly Tabernacle weighs down the mind. We are at perpetual War and Defiance with our selves, divided like the *Planetary Orbs*, between contrary motions and imperfect tendencies, and like a *factious State*, distracted and disturbed with a swarm of jarring and rebellious Passions. The Spirit indeed is willing, but then the Flesh is weak. We have, 'tis true, a Law in our *Minds*, but then we have also another in our *Members*, which wars always, and most times prevails against that of our *Mind*, and brings us into captivity to the Law of sin; so that as the Apostle says, we cannot do the things which we would.

## XI.

But, notwithstanding this strong *invigoration* of the *Animal Life*, pushing us still on to the enjoyment of sensible good, were our Intellectual part always awake, and equally attentive to that *Divine Light*, which shines within her, Man would

would always love *regularly*, tho' with the reluctance of an imperfect motion to the contrary. But 'tis far otherwise. We do not always equally attend to the *Divine Illumination*, but the light of our Understandings is often under an *Eclipse*, and so does not shine upon our Wills with an equal and uniform brightness. Hence it comes to pass that our judgments and apprehensions of things are various and changeable. And from this variety and changeableness of our *Judgments*, proceeds great variety and changeableness in our *Wills*.

## XII.

Now this being the condition of Man, he must needs be very prone and liable to *Irregular Love*. For being always strongly inclined to sensible good, and not having the *Eye* of his *attention* equally open and awake, he will be often apt to be *actually ignorant* of what he *habitually knows*, and (especially in the heat of a temptation) to judge sensible good a greater good than that which is Moral and Divine, and consequently the want of sensible good to be a greater evil than sin, and so rather than want the enjoyment of sensible good he will consent to the commission of sin, which through want of due *attention* he then erroneously thinks the lesser evil of the two.

## XIII.

Thus apt and obnoxious is Man to *Irregular Love*. But that which most of all aggravates the badness of his condition, is that 'tis all owing to himself, and that he himself is the sole Author of this his proneness to *Irregular Love*. 'Tis a point Universally receiv'd, That the present



state of Man is not that state wherein God first made him, but a state of *degeneracy* and *depravation*. And indeed, 'tis no way congruous to suppose that God could with the Honour of his Attributes send such a piece of Work immediately out of his Hands, as Man is now. And if God could not make Man at first in such a state as he is now in, then neither could he subject him to it without sin. For, if he could subject him to it without sin, then he might as well have made him so at first; but, 'tis supposed that he could not make him so at first, and therefore neither could he subject him to this condition without sin. And if not without sin, then not without sin *really* and *truly* committed by him. For, to subject him to this condition for the sake of sin *arbitrarily* imputed only, is the same as to do it without any sin at all. 'Tis necessary therefore to pre-suppose some real sin or other in Man as the cause of this his *depravation* and great proneness to *Irregular Love*.

## XIV.

But, now, whether every Man sinned in his own Person for himself, and so was his own *Adam*, according to the *Hypothesis* of the *Pre-existentialists*; or, whether one common Person sinned for all the rest, as 'tis more vulgarly held, I shall not here take upon me to *determine*. 'Tis sufficient to say, in general, that 'tis necessary to presuppose some Sin or other in man, truly and properly Speaking, as the Cause of this his Depraved and Miserable Condition. And they that can Intelligibly make out *Original Sin*, as 'tis usually term'd, to be such, may make use of that *Hypothesis*. But, if that be

not intelligible, then we must of necessity come to *Pre-existence*. However it be, this only I contend for at present, that some sin or other must be supposed in Man antecedent to this his condition, and that 'tis through his own fault that he is so prone to *Irregular Love*.

### *The Use of this to Devotion.*

THIS whole Contemplation serves very much to the greatest *Humiliation* and *Mortification* of Man, both before God, and all his Fellow-Creatures. For, if *Irregular Love* be so monstrous a deformity, and so great a folly, and if Man be so very prone to *Irregular Love*, and is also himself the Author of that proneness, what stronger *Combination* of Argument can there be imagined, for *Humility* and *Lowliness* of Spirit? For this is the worst that can be said of any thing, and is the *Sum* and *Abstract* of all that's base and vile.

It may also, Secondly, be argued from the great evil of *Irregular Love*, and from our great proneness to be guilty of it, that it highly concerns us to have constant recourse to God in Prayer, for his Divine aid and assistance, against falling into that which is so great a *Folly*, and so great a *Mischief*, and which by an Infirmary of our own contracting we are so very apt to fall into.

### *The Aspiration.*

TO thee, O my God belongs *Praise* and *Adoration*, for endowing me with those excellent

lent Powers of *Understanding* and *Love*; but to me Shame and Confusion of face, for *misapplying* the one, and *not attending* to the Dictates of the other.

I blush, O my God, and am ashamed to think that my nature should stand so much inclined to irregular Love, a thing so full of Mischief and Folly, but much more that I my self should bring my self into such a state of impotence and depravation. My heart sheweth me the great Foulness and abominableness of Sin, and yet I find my self over-prone to commit it. *So Foolish am I and Ignorant, and even as a Beast before thee.*

But I desire, O my God, to be yet more vile. I am not vile enough in my own eyes, tho too much so in thine. Nor can I ever be vile enough in my *Opinion*, for being so vile in my *Nature*. Strike me then I beseech thee with a deep, and with a lively sense of my own Wretchedness, and make me as *Humble* as I am *Wicked*.

And since, thro' the Infirmary of my flesh, I am so apt to err in the conduct and application of my Love, O hold thou up my goings in thy Paths, that my Footsteps slip not. Make me always to attend to that *Divine Light* of thine within my Breast, and let the victorious sweetness of thy Grace *outcharm* all the reliques of sensible good. But above all, Keep thy Servant from *Presumptuous sins*, lest they get the *Dominion* over me. And let all these words of my mouth, and this whole meditation of my heart be always acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer. Amen.

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REFLECTIONS  
UPON THE  
CONDUCT  
O F

Human Life :

With reference to the Study of

*Learning and Knowledg.*

In a Letter to the Excellent Lady,  
the Lady *Mashan*.

To which is annex'd, a

Visitation S E R M O N.

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SECTION 2

CONDUCT

Life

Living and Working

In order to the Well-being of the Community

VERMONT STATE

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MADAM,

**S**INCE the great Happiness or Misery of Human Life depends wholly upon the right or wrong Conduct of it, he that shall point out any of its Irregularities or Mistakes, ought to be lookt upon as an Universal Friend, and a Promoter of the Public Happiness : And the more severe he is in his Censure ( provided it be true and well-grounded ) the more charitable is he in his Undertaking, and the more likely to be serviceable in his Performance.

But then especially will he be so, if the Irregularities which he singles out be such, as are not only Great and of ill Consequence, Popular and Frequent, Inevitable and of long standing ; but such as lie secret and unobserved, and have all along passed under the Notion and Character of Excellencies, and been made rather matter of particular Commendation than of Disparagement. If the Light that is in thee be Darkness, said our Blessed Lord, how great is that Darkness ! And so may I say, If those things that go for great Excellencies are real Faults, how great are such Faults, and how worthy to be censured ! He therefore that reflects upon such Misconducts as these, does a double piece of Service, and obliges by his Discovery as well as by his Reproof.

This Consideration, Madam, has engaged my present Censure upon that side of Human Life which respects the Study of Learning and Knowledge, the greatest Faults of which ( if I mistake not ) have been, and are still, by a kind of unaccountable Superstition,

on, Canoniz'd for Vertues ; and tho really neither fewer nor less enormous than those of the Moral Part, yet have been so little Discern'd or Consider'd, or at least Animadverted upon, that a Censure of this Nature looks like a sort of a Desideratum in the Learned World, and such as even for the Singularity of it ought no longer to be Omitted.

The Truth is, the Faults of the Intellectual Way have this peculiar in them, that they are not so liable to be Discover'd. That Light which divulges other Miscarriages, will be sure to hide these : For besides that they are visible only to a few, like the private Slips of a Religious Convent, known only to those of the same Order ; ( for none can judge of the Faults of the Learned without Learning ) I say besides this, those few that do discern them, have yet seldom Ingenuity enough to confess and acknowledg them. For either they are so Proud as not to be willing to own themselves to have been so long under a Mistake ; or else so Ill-natured that they don't care others should be directed to a better way than they themselves have travell'd in, but will have Posterity trudge on in the same dirty miry Road after their Forefathers.

How far I am from this narrow and illiberal Temper of Soul the following Reflections may give Evidence, in which according to that measure of Understanding God has given me, I have endeavour'd to mark out some of the grosser and less observ'd Misconducts of Human Life in reference to the Study of Learning and Knowledg, wherewith I myself have been too much and too long imposed upon, and which after all my Conviction, ( so invincible are the Impressions of an early Prejudice ) I can hardly yet find power to correct : For Education is the great Bias of Human Life, and there is this

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double Witch-craft in it, that 'tis a long time before a Man can see any thing amiss in a way which he has been used to, and when he does, 'tis not very easie after that to change it for a better.

What Success these Reflections may have towards the Reforming the Abuses here toucht upon, is beyond the reach of my eye-sight to presage. I am satisfied that they carry Reason and Evidence enough with them to stand their ground against any Opposite Reason that may be offer'd against them; but whether this will make them an equal Match for Authority and contrary Prescription, is not so certain. But let the Event be what it will, here I fancy will lie the Contest, between Reason on one side, and Education and Authority on the other. Now which of these will prevail, I know not: But I know which should.

In the mean while how some of the rigid Votaries and Professors of Old Learning will relish these Reflections, I can more easily Divine. These are such Bigots in their way, that a Man were as good go to convert the Jews as to reason with any of these stiff-necked Gentlemen. I do not therefore expect to convince many of these. For tho Reason may do great things, yet it can never work Miracles. And a Man may as soon put the Sun out of the Ecliptic, or the Rivers out of their Courses, as turn these Men out of their Way. They are Conjured into a Circle, and nothing less than a more powerful Magic can ever get them out.

I do not therefore expect, I say, to do great Cures upon the Men of this Complexion, or to merit any Thanks from them. 'Tis well if I do not provoke them, and make them Angry with me for telling out of School. But if I happen to bring over here and there an ingenuous and unflavoured Spirit, some of these who  
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are not suck'd in too far within the common Vortex of the World, I shall not think my Labour ill bestow'd, nor much regard the Magisterial Censures of those State-sowr-Students, whose great and long Study had no better effect upon them, but only to make them too wise for Conviction.

I do not take your Ladyship to be concern'd but only in the last of these Reflections. The two former may give you Entertainment, but they are not intended for your Instruction. Your Ladyship is not to learn either the Object, or the Method of Study, but only to be slackned in your Vehement Prosecution of it. You take the right Path, but you run too fast in it, and are therefore desired to moderate your Pace, not only for fear you should outstrip us, but lest you should grow too wise for your Self, and for the World you live in, and to your own great cost find that weighty Reflection of the Wise Man to be true, which you were wont to take upon his Authority, that in much Wisdom is much Grief, and that he that increases Knowledge, increases Sorrow.

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## The First Reflection.

*Wherein the general Conduct of Human Life is taxed, for placing Learning and Knowledge, in such things as are little or nothing perfective of the Understanding.*

### I.

BEING Naturally more than ordinarily disposed to *Thoughtfulness*, and from the circumstances of my present Solitude and Retirement further invited to it; I began one day to fall into a deep Meditation upon the Conduct of *my own*, and of *Human Life*. What Reflections I made upon *my own*, are too peculiarly Calculated for my proper Circumstances, to be of any General use, and therefore I shall not trouble you with them. But as for those past upon the Conduct of *Human Life*, I think they are of too general use, and withal of too Weighty Consequence, not to be Communicated. These therefore I shall think worth while to draw up into a little more orderly form than wherein they were first conceived, and present to your *Ladyship's* Consideration.

### II.

First then I consider that the Conduct of Human Life must be to the *End* of Human Life, which is the same with the End of *Man*, which is *Happiness*. This Conduct therefore must be,

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and necessarily is, in *Gross to Happiness*. But now whereas there are two Faculties or Powers of Man, by the right ordering of which this Happiness is to be attain'd, *Understanding* and *Will*, therefore more immediately and distinctly, this Conduct of Human Life is in order to the Government and Exercise of these two Faculties, the due Regulation of which is the *Immediate End*, to which Human Life is to be Conducted. There is therefore a double Conduct of Human Life, *Intellectual* and *Moral*.

## III.

As to the *Moral Conduct* of Human Life, I do not intend at present to spend any Reflection upon it. Not because 'tis Unexceptionable, but because 'tis too Obnoxious, the general Impertinence and Irregularity of it being too open and exposed, to need any. And besides 'tis a *Buzz*, that has been shot at so often, ever since *Preaching* and *Writing* has been in the World, that 'tis now so thick-set with holes, that there is scarce room left to fasten a *new Arrow* in it.

## IV.

But tho the *Moral Conduct* of Human Life stands so much in the way, and has been so much reflected upon, yet it has fared otherwise with that which is here call'd *Intellectual*, which stands not so fair a *Mark*, nor has been so often hit. Not that 'tis really less faulty ( for perhaps we shall be found to be as much out in the Conduct of our Understandings as in that of our Wills ) but because its faultiness is less *notorious*, and lies further in, and must be drawn forth into View by a Chain of Consequences, which not over many have either *discernment* enough to make, or *Patience* enough to attend to.

## V.

This is the Reason why *this* part of Human Conduct has hitherto scaped so well the Censure and Animadversion not only of the vulgar, but of the Masters of Reason, who have generally emptied their Quivers upon the *Moral* part; and this is the Reason why I am not willing it should escape *now*. And I think a good Reason too, since next to the *Greatness* of an Irregularity, nothing renders it so fit for Reflection, as its *Privacy* and *Retirement*.

## VI.

The Subject therefore of the present Reflections, is the *Intellectual Conduct* of Human Life, or as I express it in the Title, the Conduct of Human Life, with reference to the Study of Learning and Knowledge. It is here supposed that this Conduct is *faulty* and *irregular*, in its being made the Subject of *Reflection*. What its Faults and Irregularities are, I shall shew, by ranging them into these three Orders, with reference to the *End*, *Means*, and *Degree* of *Affection*.

1. The placing of Learning and Knowledge in such things as are little or nothing Perfective of the Understanding.
2. The undue and irregular method of prosecuting what is really perfective of it.
3. The too Importunate and over-earnest pursuit after Knowledge in General.

These are the three *Cardinal Irregularities* I have observ'd in the Intellectual Conduct of Human Life, and upon each of these I shall bestow a *Reflection*.

## VII.

The business of this first Reflection shall be to Tax the General Conduct of Human Life, for placing Learning and Knowledge, in such things as are little or nothing Perfective of the Understanding. This I confess to be a Charge of more than ordinary Severity and Boldness; because it fastens an Imputation of Folly upon the *Learned Order* (For with them only is my present Concern) and not only so, but also in *that* very thing wherein they think their Wisdom and Intellectual accomplishment consists, and upon which they value themselves above the rest of Mankind. To question their conduct in any thing else would be but a trivial Charge, and such as they would not only readily *Pardon* and *Acknowledge*; it being a common thing with Learned Men not only to *own*, but studiously to *affect* Ignorance in things besides their Profession, as in Secular business, the common Affairs of Life, the Mysteries of Trades and the like: But to censure them as defective in that one thing they Pretend to, to make that their *Blind Side*, where they think they see clearest; to maintain that they are not only not really wise and knowing, but that generally they don't so much as know what true Knowledge is, and that they generally place it in such things as contribute little or nothing to the perfection of that, whereby they *really* excel the *Brutes*, and would be *thought* to excel the *Common sort of Men*; this is so high, and so disobliging a Charge, that I fear those who from the force of what shall be here urg'd, may be *convinc'd* of the *Truth* of it, will hardly *give* the *Boldness* of it.

But as high a Charge as it is, I question not but that it may be, and will be here made good. And that it may appear to be true, we will first of all by way of *Address* or *Preparation*, consider what antecedent grounds of probability there are, that Men should generally place Learning and Knowledge in such things as are little or nothing perfective of the *rational Part*; and then in the second place we will proceed directly to prove that they do so.

## IX.

As to the first, your *Ladyship* cannot be so little acquainted either with *hidden Springs*, or *outward Workings* of Human Nature, as not to have observ'd that however strong and universal is the desire of Knowledge, yet Men are generally more in Love with the *Fame* and *Reputation* of it, than with the *thing* it self. There are indeed here and there a few *humble retired* Souls that are otherwise disposed, and like your *Ladyship*, are so far from loving the *Fame* and *Credit* of Knowledge *before* Knowledge it self, that they don't love it at *all*, but are content to court *Wisdom* privately, and enjoy their own *Light* in the *Dark*. "For it may be they consider, that be their Attainments what they will, "Fame is a thing of infinite uncertainty and "contingency, that it depends more upon the "Humours of Men, or some more secret unaccountable *Fate*, than upon real excellency "and merit; that some have the luck to be popular, and cry'd up for nothing, when in the "mean while others that are really and highly "deserving, can scarce keep their Heads above

"Contempt; that the World is seldom just to  
 "true Merit, and that nothing is weighed in a  
 "falser Ballance than real Excellency, whether  
 "Moral or Intellectual; and that there is little  
 "reason to expect it should ever be otherwise  
 "as long as *Envy* and *Ignorance* hold the Scales.  
 "Then again it may be they consider with them-  
 "selves, that suppose true Worth were secure of  
 "Reputation, yet what a poor slender good is  
 "it! For what is it to be talk'd of, or pointed at!  
 "Should a Man be never so Popular, the *Antipa-*  
 "*thes* will never hear of him; or if they do,  
 "what is he the better for what is said of him  
 "there? And should his Fame, like the Sun, Tra-  
 "vail round the whole Globe, besides that he  
 "is but Master of a Point when he has All, he can  
 "enjoy no more of it but just what he hears,  
 "which is inconsiderable. And yet as inconside-  
 "rable as it is, 'tis like to be his whole Portion.  
 "For as for *Posthumous* Glory, it comes too  
 "late to be any thing valuable. He will either  
 "not be sensible of it, or despise it. For cer-  
 "tainly it must needs be mightily beneath the  
 "improvements of a separate state to put any  
 "value upon the injudicious praises of poor  
 "Mortals here below. Or suppose that a De-  
 "ceased Spirit could take any Delight in reflect-  
 "ing upon the Fame he has left behind him, yet  
 "'tis to be consider'd that *the Fashion of this World*  
 "*passes away*; that those in whose Praises he out-  
 "lives himself, must also shortly dye, and that  
 "then his *Fame* will have a Funeral, as well  
 "as *himself*. These perhaps, or such like Consi-  
 "derations, may prevail with your *Ladyship* and a  
 "few more *thinking* Persons, to have but a very  
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cold and indifferent regard for the Reputation of Learning and Knowledge: But as for the generality of Mankind, it must be own'd that they are fond of it to a strange degree, and are more concerned to be accounted Wise and Learned, than really to be so. Otherwise I question whether our *Libraries* would be so full as they are.

## X.

But now, though the generality of men be so passionately and keenly set upon the *fame* of being Learned and Knowing, yet (so little hath Nature designed to gratifie this ambitious Humour) there are but a very few that have either a Genius and Inclination for *Learning it self*, or a Capacity of attaining to it. Not an *Inclination*, because there is a great Variety in the *Speculative*, as well as *Moral* Inclinations of Men, one being naturally disposed to this sort of Study, and another to that; whereas true Knowledge whatever it be (which shall be considered in its due place) is of one *determinate* kind or nature in general, and consequently must require a certain petuliar frame and disposition of mind. Not a *Capacity*, because the generality of Men are known to have but indifferent Intellectuals, suited to the exigences of *common Life*, when as true Knowledge (whatever it be) must be supposed to be a thing of uncommon difficulty, and the study of it a Work fit only for sublimer Wits, the more elevated and *awakened* part of Mankind.

## XI.

Now put these two things together, that almost all men would fain be thought Learned and Knowing, and that there is but here and there one that is naturally made and fitted for true



Knowledge, and then consider what is like to be the result of this Complication; Why, the latter. Few may succeed well in the search of what they were naturally qualified for, and having attained to a Competency of true Knowledge, such as is perfective of the Understanding, they find themselves under no *Temptation* to place it in any thing else, or to bring into Credit any other sort of Knowledge. Because having arrived so far, they are either wise enough to *undervalue* the Fame of being Learned, or else despair not of attaining it by their Proficiency in *True Knowledge*. Here therefore they take up their Rest.

## XII.

But now what shall we do with the *others*? Are they to be perswaded that they are not of a *Made* for the Study and attainment of Learning? You'll find it tough Work to convince them of that. But suppose it possible that they could be made sensible that they are not like to Commence very Learned and Knowing, yet all the World shall never be able to perswade them to lay aside that Natural Itch of being *so accounted*. But you'll say, tho this Inclination be too Natural and Inbred to be quite *laid aside*, yet there's hope it may be *Govern'd*. No, nor that neither. They must put in for the *Prize*, and 'tis in vain to dissuade them from it. But they must despair of ever winning it in a *fair* way, being supposed not able to reach the Tree of Knowledge. True, They have therefore but one way left, and that is, *turn the Tables*, and cry up something or other for Learning which they are capable of. No matter whether it *deserve* that Name, that is, whether it be really perfective of the Rational Part

Part or no, 'tis enough if they can *reach* it. For those that can't compass *true* Riches, and yet will have the *Name* and Credit of it, are put upon the Necessity of *Coyning* and *Counterfeiting*.

## XIII.

And truly this Supposition seems to me so very reasonable, that were Experience altogether *Silent* in the Case, and were I utterly unacquainted with the state of Learning in the World, yet if I had a Draught given me of Human Nature, and were told how much the Ambition of being esteemed as Learned and Knowing, exceeds both the *Desire* and the *Ability* to be so, and were then asked what I thought would be the Intellectual Conduct of Human Life, I should without any further enquiry conclude, that in all probability Men would generally place Learning and Knowledge in such things as signify little or nothing to the Perfection of the Understanding.

## XIV.

But from grounds of Probability that they should do so, let us proceed to prove *directly* that they do so. Now in this Charge there is something *supposed*, and something *asserted*. The Supposition is, that there are some things, the Knowledge of which is little or nothing Perfective of the Understanding. The Assertion is, that Learning is generally placed in the Knowledge of such things. The Proof of the Supposition will engage my Pen upon the discussion of a very *curious* and *weighty Question*, wherein the Perfection of the Understanding does consist, or what it is that is Perfective of the Understanding? Which when we have duly fixed and stated, we shall then have a certain *Measure* to go by in the Proof of the *Assertion*.

## XV.

## XV.

To the Question then I answer, That the Perfection of the Understanding, as that of the Will, is either *Formal* or *Objective*. The *Formal Perfection* of the Understanding, as that of the Will, is no other than its Exercise or Operation, which is *Thinking* and *Perception*, as that of the other is *Willing* and *Chusing*. According to the vulgar *Maxim*, that the *Perfection* of every thing is its *Operation*, which must be understood, only of the *Formal Perfection*. The *Objective Perfection* of the Understanding is *Truth*, as that of the Will is *Good*. The Result of these two Perfections joined together, is what in the Understanding we call *Knowledge*, and what in the Will we call *Virtue*.

## XVI.

Our concern is not at present with the *Formal*, but with the *Objective* Perfection of the Understanding. This we have said in general to be *Truth*, as that of the Will is *Good*. And thus far there is neither *Difficulty* nor *Controversie*. All therefore that further remains to be here considered, is, what *Truth* that is which is the *Objective Perfection* of the Understanding, or, what *Truth* that is, in the *Knowledge* of which the *Perfection* of the Understanding does consist.

## XVII.

Now since there is so great a Proportion and Correspondence between the Understanding and the Will, and the Perfection of each, the first Entrance we shall make upon the Resolution of this Question shall be to consider, what good that is which is the *Objective Perfection* of the Will, or what good that is in the desiring and embracing

embracing of which the Perfection of the Will does consist. Which being determined, will afford at least a *Fair Ground* and *Occasion*, tho not an *infallible Measure* for the determination of the other.

## XVIII.

Here then 'twill be necessary to premise a Consideration of the Kinds of good. The most general distribution of which I conceive to be into these two, *Necessary* and *Contingent* good. By necessary good I understand that which cannot but be good, that which is always and immotably good. And this comprizes under it the good of the *End* which is desirable for it self, commonly called *Pleasant Good*. And the good of the *Means*, which has an immutable Connexion with it, and is desirable for the other, commonly called *Profitable Good*. By *Contingent Good* I understand that which may, or may not be good, and is good, whenever it is so, only upon a *Positive* account, because enjoyn'd by the Will of a Competent Authority. This can never be the good of the *End*, or a self-desirable Good; nor can it be *such* a good of the *Means*, as has a *Natural* and *Immutable* Connexion with it; but is always an Arbitrary and Mutable *Means*.

## XIX.

This being briefly premised, I shall venture to assert, That that Good which is the Objective Perfection of the Will, is *Necessary Good*. Either that which is *Self-desirable*, as God the Universal, or any other particular pleasant Good. Or else that which has an *immutable Connexion* with it, as Moral Good. As for Contingent Good, that is no otherwise perfective of the Will, than in the force

force and vertue of the necessary Good. For Obedience to a positive Law is no otherwise a Vertue, than as 'tis included in some general natural Law, whereof 'tis a contingent instance. Which is also the ground commonly assigned by *Casuits*, why Human Laws oblige in Conscience. According to that of *Aquinas*, *Lex Humana Obligat in Conscientia, quatenus participat legem æternam & naturalem.* *An Human Law obliges in Conscience as much as it partakes of the Eternal and Natural Law.* That is, as far as it is founded, or relies upon the immutable Will of God and the Dictate of Natural Reason.

## XX.

This is too plain to need much Proof, though not so plain but that it may be demonstrated. If then a Reason be demanded why the Objective Perfection of the Will is only necessary, not contingent good, 'twill be sufficient to say, that that only is Perfective of the Will, which naturally and of it self, makes it *Happy*, and wherein he can *acquiesce* with satisfaction and delight. But this is only necessary good, that which is essentially, intrinsically, and immutably good, either as the *End*, or as having a *Natural Connexion* with it, either of which involves Happiness. As for contingent good, that is supposed to be of it self indifferent as to Happiness; and tho by positive Ordination it may be made a condition of it, yet still it contributes to it only as an *Arbitrary Means*, which has no inward goodness in it self, and whose whole Moral Excellency is derived from some general Law of Reason, whereof 'tis an Instance by accident, and in vertue whereof it obliges. Thus *Moses's* striking the Rock, and nothing

nothing morally good or perfective of the Will in it, but only as 'twas an Instance of that *General Law* of obeying the Divine Will in all things. Nor did the Vertue of *Moses* consist, properly and strictly speaking, in *striking* the Rock, but in *Obeying* God by striking the Rock.

## XXI.

By this it appears what good that is, in the desiring and embracing of which the Moral Perfection of the Will does properly and ultimately consist. That it is *Necessary*, not *Contingent* good. Whence we may take Instruction how to state the Perfection of the Understanding, which we shall do by following the same Common Measure. First then be it here also premised, that as in relation to the Will, all good is either *necessary* or *Contingent*, so in relation to the Understanding, all Truth is either *Necessary* or *Contingent*. For besides the immediateness of the Opposition, which is Contradictory, I further consider, that that must be the Adequate Division of *Truth*, which is of *Being*; Truth being a property of Being, and such an one, as tho formally and abstractly different (for the Subject must never be included in the Precise Reason of the Property) is yet Materially, and Concretely the same with it. But now Necessary and Contingent is the Adequate Division of *Being*, therefore also of *Truth*.

## XXII.

By Necessary Truth I understand that which cannot but be True, that which is always and immutably True. Such is God among *Simple Truths*, who is immutably what he is, and all the *Divine Ideas* which (as I have elsewhere abundantly explained it) are the very Essence of God,

Vid. Reason and Religion.  
pag. 82.

as

Vid. The  
same Treatise,  
p. 203,

as variously imitable or participable, thus or thus. Such also among *Complex Truths* are all Propositions of Eternal Truth, whether Absolute or Hypothetical, with all their regular Inferences and Conclusions, which (as I have also elsewhere shewn) are nothing else but the *Divine Ideas* themselves as they respect each other according to their several immutable Habitues and Combinations.

## XXIII.

By Contingent Truth I understand that which may or may not be True; that, whose Truth depends not upon the Essence of God, (That *Ground* and *Pillar* of all *Necessary Truth*) but only upon his *Meer Will* and free Pleasure, either decreeing or permitting. Such among *Simple Truths* are all Created Beings, the whole *Ectypal World*, and all things in it, which tho made according to the Eternal and Immutable Patterns of the Divine Ideas or *Archetypal World*, yet in themselves are Temporary and *Mutab.* Such also among *Complex Truths* are all those Propositions, the Terms of which have no Essential or Immutable Connexion with each other, but are so and so combined and related, meerly by the Decree or Permission of him, who is the Author of whatever is besides himself.

## XXIV.

Under the First Order of Truths are comprehended all those things which are the Matter of those *Arts* and *Sciences* which are built upon stable and immovable Foundations, which depend not upon the System of the present World, but were antecedent to it, and might have been studied before 'twas made, and according to which the World it self was made, such as *Theology*,  
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*Metaphysics, Morality, Geometry, &c.* together with all those unchangeable Rules and Measures of Reason and Consequence which are to be used about them all, which is the Subject of that Art or Science we call *Logick*. Under the second Order are comprehended all *Matters of Fact*, all *Temporary Events*, all *Natural or Artificial Effects*, &c. Which are the Matter of all Arbitrary and Mutable Sciences; as *History, Chronology, Knowledge of Tongues, &c.* Which began with this *Mundan System*, and stand or fall with it.

## XXV.

Now as that *Good* which is primely and properly perfective of the Will, is *Necessary Good*; so following the same Proportion I shall not doubt to assert, That that *Truth* which is Primely and Properly Perfective of the Understanding, is also *Necessary Truth*. And as *Contingent Good* is no otherwise Perfective of the Will, than in the Force and Vertue of the *Necessary Good* (as was above Explained) so likewise *Contingent Truth*, is no otherwise Perfective of the Understanding than in the Force and Vertue of *Necessary Truth*, that is, of the *Divine Ideas* wherein 'tis contain'd. As for Example, when I speculate some particular Artificial Triangle, which is a Contingent Simple Truth, it is no otherwise Perfective of my Understanding, than as it is beheld in its Necessary and Immutable Nature, or (which is all one) in the *Divine Idea*. And thus again, when I form a *Proposition* concerning this Triangle, by ascribing to it some Property or other, which is a Contingent Complex Truth, this again is no otherwise Perfective of my Understanding than as it belongs to, and is beheld in the Nature of a Triangle



angle in *Common*, which is Necessary and Immut-  
table, being no other than an Idea, or a *Deter-*  
*minate Mode* of the *Divine Omniformity*. So that  
at length the Perfection of the Understanding is  
resolv'd into the Knowledge of necessary Truth,  
which is its only Objective Perfection; that which  
is Contingent being no way perfective of it, but  
only in vertue of the other.

## XXVI.

I am (*Madam*) very sensible how strange and  
Paradoxical this way of Philosophizing will seem  
to those who are either un-addicted to Meditati-  
on in general, or not conversant in Theories of  
this kind; and therefore for *their sakes*, rather  
than for any *inevidence* of the *Argument*, I will  
give some Proof and Confirmation of it, which  
I will so order, that it shall be an *Explanation* at  
the same time. I will therefore first shew that  
*'tis* so; and secondly, *how* and *why* 'tis so. That  
it is so I prove thus: First, I suppose that God  
was once when there was nothing besides God.  
Again, I suppose that as the Being of God did  
go before all other being in Order of *Time*, so  
in Order of *Nature* it was antecedent even to the  
Will of Creating, putting, or permitting any  
thing. Again, I suppose that there was there-  
fore then no other Truth but necessary Truth,  
that is, the Divine Ideas with their several Habi-  
tudes and Complications: I suppose again, that  
therefore God must be *considered* as knowing then  
only these *necessary Truths*. And yet I suppose  
again, that God was as perfect then as he is now;  
and consequently, that the Divine *Understanding*  
was as perfect then as now, the Nature of God  
requiring not only that he should be *Absolutely*  
*Perfect*,

Perfect, but that he should be so in *himself*. Whence I infer, that therefore the whole Perfection of the Divine Understanding is to be resolved into the sole Knowledge of *necessary Truths*, and that the Knowledge of *Contingent Truth* gives no Perfection to it, any otherwise than as 'tis beheld in that which is necessary, as was said before.

## XXVII.

From this Process of Reasoning, I presume 'tis sufficiently evident, that the Objective Perfection of the *Divine Understanding* is only *Necessary Truth*, which I take in the first place to be a strong ground of presumption, that the Perfection of *Human Understanding* does also consist in the same. But to make it further plain that it does so, I suppose again, that nothing were to exist but only God, and one Intelligent Being; and that this Intelligent Being had the full and perfect fruition of God. Upon this supposition I enquire, whether this Intelligent Being would be perfectly Happy or no? Without all question he would, as enjoying an *All-sufficient Good*. Well, if so, then he must be perfectly happy in his *Understanding*. And it is most certain, that he could then have the knowledge of very little more than *Necessary Truth*; for all that he could possibly know besides, would be only that he himself did exist, and that he knew these Necessary Truths, and that he was happy in the knowledge of them, and the like. And lest the knowledge of such Contingencies should be thought any Accumulation to his Happiness, we will carry our Hypothesis a little further, by supposing that this Intelligent Being were not to attend to any

of his own Perfections, or to any of those few Contingent Truths resulting from them, but were only to Contemplate God and the Divine Ideas; and then I demand whether his Understanding would be sufficiently perfected or no? 'Tis necessary to answer in the Affirmative, whence 'tis also as necessary to conclude, that the only Objective Perfection of our Understanding is *Necessary Truth*.

## XXVIII.

This I think sufficient to prove that 'tis so. I shall now briefly explain the *Mode* of it, by shewing *how* and *why* 'tis so; and I account for it after this manner: Necessary Truth is the same with the Divine Ideas; and accordingly *Plato*, I remember, calls Science a *Participation of Ideas*, and the Divine Ideas are the very Essence of God, as 'tis variously imitable according to its *Omni-formity*: Necessary Truth therefore is no other than the Essence of God, the very *Substance* of the Divinity. More particularly, it is the same with the Divine λόγος, the second Person in the Holy Triad, who is ἡ ἀρχέτυπος σφραγίς, as *Philo* speaks, the *Archetypal Seal*, and κόσμος νοητός, the *Intellectual World*, and ἀρχέτυπον παρόδειγμα, the *Archetypal Paradigme*, and ἰδέα ἡ ἰδέων, the *Idea of Ideas*. Whom also the Scripture represents as the *Wisdom* of his Father, and as the *Light* of the World, and who enlightens every Man that comes into it, not only *Efficiently* (as 'tis vulgarly understood) but also *Formally*, he himself being the *Truth* and the *Light*, in which we see all things.

## XXIX.

These things (*Madam*) I only hint to you, referring you for further satisfaction to your deservedly

vedly admired Monsieur *Malebranche* in his *de la Recherche de la Verite*, and to a Treatise of mine called *Reason and Religion*; where I have purposely treated of the *Divine Ideas*, and of our seeing all things in them; In which however whatever is deficient shall be supplied in another Latin Treatise of a larger compass, now under my hands, and which I shall communicate to the World e're long (if God please to continue my Life and Health) under the Title of *Theoria Mundi Idealis, sive Metaphysica Platonica*.

## XXX.

However, lest I should be thought to proceed upon a precarious ground, I will here give you one short and evident Demonstration, that Necessary Truth is the very Essence of God, and then advance: That God is the cause of whatever is besides himself; or that whatever is, is either God, or the effect of God, is a clear and acknowledged Principle. Upon which I thus argue: Necessary Truth is either God, or the Effect of God: But it is not the Effect of God, therefore it is no other than God himself.

## XXXI.

That it is not the Effect of God, is evident from the many absurdities that would follow upon that Supposition. For first, God would be then a *Necessary Agent*; for if Necessary Truth be an *Effect*, 'tis a *Necessary Effect*, and a Necessary Effect must have a Necessary Cause. Again, God would not only be a *Necessary Agent*, but also (which is worse) an *Unintelligent Agent*. The consequence is unavoidable, for if Truth be the Effect of God, then antecedently to the effecting of it, there was no Truth, and consequently no *Knowledge*.

Cogitationes  
Rationales de  
Deo,  
p. 296.

Again, if Necessary Truth be the Effect of God, then the Perfection of the Divine Understanding must be supposed to depend upon something that is not God; nay, upon something Created by God. 'Twill follow again, that God has made something which he cannot destroy. And lastly, to add no more, if Necessary Truth be the Effect of God, then there will be something *Necessary*, *Immutable*, and *Eternal*, &c. besides God. The *Consequences* are all *plain*, and so are the *Absurdities*. The last of which appeared so great to the Excellent Monsieur *Poiret*, a stiff Opposer of your beloved *Malebranche*, and of the *Ideal Philosophy*, that he urges this as one Argument against the very *being* of Necessary Truth, because then there would be something *Necessary* besides God, not considering that this Necessary Truth is really one and the same with God himself. And this alone puts by the force of his Argument against the *being* of Necessary Truth, which however is sufficiently conclusive to the purpose we now aim at, that Necessary Truth is not the Effect of God. For if it were, then his Absurdity would come in, and there would be something Necessary besides God. Since then Necessary Truth is not the Effect of God, it remains by Vertue of the *premised Disjunction*, that it must be no other than the very Substance and Essence of the Deity.

## XXXII.

I further consider, that the Essence of God is intimately and immediately united to the mind of Man; this is plain from *Scripture*, which tells us, that in God is our *Life*, our *Motion*, and our *Being*. And from *Philosophy*, which assures us, that what pervades all things, must needs be immediately

ately united with every thing. And for this, you have the Authority of your excellent *Malebranche*, who therefore calls God the *Place of Spirits*, as Space is the *Place of Bodies*. *De la Recherche de la Verite, P. 208.*

## XXXIII.

Now upon these two Suppositions, that Necessary Truth is the same with God himself, and that the Essence of God is immediately united to the Mind of Man, 'tis easie to Conceive *how* and *why* Necessary Truth should be the Objective Perfection of our Understanding; since to make an Object Perfective of the *Faculty*, nothing else is requisite, than that it be its *proper good*, and that it be *intimately Present* to it. And this will also sufficiently give us to understand, that *Contingent Truth* cannot be the *Objective* Perfection of the Mind; first, because *that* is a Created Being, whereas God alone is our proper Good. And secondly, because 'tis *without* us, and cannot be immediately united to our minds, without which condition, were it never so *Perfective* otherwise, it could contribute nothing to the *Perfection* of our Understandings.

There is no First Principle seems to me more Evident, than that the whole Perfection of the Mind does consist in its Union with God, who is her *only* as well as *true* Good. For the good of the Mind must of necessity be something *Spiritual*, otherwise it would be of a Nature inferiour to her self, and so not capable of being her Perfection. But neither is that enough. Whatever is the good of the Mind must not be only of a *like* Nature with the Mind, that is, of a *Spiritual*, but of a *Superior* Nature too. It must be something above the Mind that can be its Perfection, and

that can act upon it, and enlighten it, and reward it, and raise pleasing Sensations in it, otherwise how can it add any thing to its better Being or Perfection? And in order to all this it must be intimately united with it, otherwise how can it so act upon it? But now God is the only Spiritual Being, whom we can possibly conceive qualified to be the Good of our Minds. Whence it follows, that he only is so, and that we cannot become either more Perfect or more Happy in any kind or degree, but by our Union with and Possession of God. Whence it further follows, that Truth could not be any Perfection of our Understandings, if it were not the same with the Divine Essence, and consequently that that Truth only is a Perfection of the Mind, which is the same with God. And since that is only *Ideally Necessary Truth*, I conclude, that this, and that only is the Objective Perfection of Human Mind.

## XXXIV.

And thus have I given a full Resolution to the Curious and Important Question which the Proof of my Supposition engaged me upon, and which is to be the Measure of what follows in the Reflection. It is plain from hence, that there are some things the Knowledge whereof is finite or nothing perfective of the Understanding. For as I have shewn, 'tis not *Contingent*, but *Necessary Truth*, wherein the Perfection of the Understanding does consist. Whence it follows, that True Learning ought to be placed in the Knowledge of *Necessary Truth*, in the Comprehension of those Arts and Sciences, whose Foundations are not Arbitrary, but Stable and Immutable, and in understanding the Eternal and Unchange-

able Laws and Measures of *Reason* and *Consequence*. He therefore is the truly Learned and Knowing Man, who has furnished his Mind with bright and clear Ideas, lodged them orderly and regularly in his Head, and settled the Relations and Consequences of one to another. He that is able to think clearly and distinctly (for so much a Man knows, as he distinctly understands, and no more) to judge truly and solidly, and to reason dependently and consequentially. In short, he that sees most of the *Divine Ideas*, is most familiarly conversant in the Intelligible World, and has the largest and the clearest View of the *Field of Truth*. This I hold to be Learning, and Intellectual Perfection; and besides what Arguments I have alledged in behalf of this Hypothesis, it is further Confirmed by the Authority of *Plato*, when he makes the *Happiness* or *Perfection* of Man (for 'tis all one) to consist in the *Contemplation of Ideas*.

## XXXV.

But notwithstanding the unquestionable Certainty of the Premises, this is not that Measure which the generality of the World has thought fit to proceed by. Learning is generally placed in the Knowledge of *Contingent*, not of *Necessary Truth*. For your *Ladyship* very well knows that the World does not esteem him a Learned Man, whose Learning has clear'd his Understanding, who is arriv'd to Clearness and Distinctness of Conception, and is a thorough Master of *Notion* and *Discourse*: No, 'twill cost great Pains, great Labour of Mind, and Anxiety of Thinking to arrive to this *Pitch*. Nor will all the Pains in the World do, unless a Man be Naturally *made* for it, unless



iefs he be of a *Notional Complexion*, and has had his Head cast in a *Metaphysical Mould*. Whereupon this Attainment is like to be the Lot of a very Few. This therefore must not be *Learning*, but something else must, that lies more within *Common reason* tho of no real Moment to the perfection of the understanding. Such (as I have shewn) are *Contingent Truths*, and yet Learning is generally plac'd in the Knowledge of these

## XXXVI.

For first, 'tis reckon'd a notable point of Learning to understand variety of *Languages*. This alone gives a Man a Title to Learning without one Grane of Sense; and on the other side, let a Man be an *Angel* for *Notion* and *Discourse*, yet unless he can express the same Thoughts in variety of Words, he may go for a *Rational*, but will by no means be esteem'd a *Learned Man*. And this brings to my mind a Passage which I met with not long since in *London*, where being in Company with an Ingenious French Man, I ask'd him of what repute *M. Malebranche* was with the *Learned* in *France*? He told me, that he was look'd upon as a great Master of *Notion* and *Speculation*, but as a Man of no great Learning. I ask'd him, Why? Because, said he, he understands but few *Languages*. How much that excellent Author's Talent may lie that way I am not concern'd. But whatever it be, the most *Learned* of them all must give me leave to say, that I would rather be Master of a Quarter of his Sense, than of all the *Languages* that may be form'd out of the *Alphabet*. But is it not a strange thing that so much *Stress* should be laid upon such a *Trifle*? For what am I the better for being able to tell what 'tis a Clock in several Languages?

Languages; What does this signifie to the Perfection of my Understanding? Words are purely in order to *Thought* and *Sense*, and therefore are of no further value than as they serve as helps either to *Learn*, or to *Communicate* the other. To affect them therefore for *themselves*, is to turn the *Means* into the *End*, than which nothing is more absurd. And yet this vain piece of *Pedantry* has prevailed all the World over, and with some to that degree, that they have confounded *Ideas* with *Words*, and have made all *Science* to terminate in the latter. Thus the Philosophers of the *Nominal way*, and particularly Mr. *Hobbs*, who makes Reason to be nothing else but *Sequela Nominum*, a well-order'd Train of Words. Never certainly was there a grosser piece of Idolatry, nor a plainer Argument of the great degeneracy of Mankind. And tho' all the Multipliers of Tongues are not Comprehended under this latter charge, yet it may concern them to consider, how great a Folly it must needs be, to place Learning in that, which is one of the greatest *Curses* upon *Earth*, and which shall utterly *Cease* in *Heaven*.

1 Cor.  
13. 8.

### XXXVII.

Again, it passes for an extraordinary part of Learning to understand *History*, that is, in other words, to know what a company of silly Creatures, call'd *Men*, have been doing for almost this 6000 years. Now what is my Understanding the Perfecter for knowing this? I deny not that but that there are some matters of Fact, as the more remarkable Turns of *Ecclesiastical History*, together with the greater Revolutions of the *Civil World*, that may be of *Moment* to be known; not that the Knowledge of them as such is *Learning*, or  
Perfective

Perfective of the Understanding; but because by discovering to us the Conduct of Divine Providence they supply us with occasions of adoring and glorifying the wisdom and goodness of God. I am not therefore against the *knowing* these things, but only I would not have men think themselves the *Wiser* or more *Learned* for such *Knowledge*. For 'tis one thing to say that a thing *deserves* to be known, and another to say that 'tis *Learning* or *Wisdom* to know it. For a thing may *deserve* to be known, not as *perfecting* the *Understanding*, but merely as *touching* upon our *Interest*. I grant therefore that it may be of *Consequence* to know some Historical Passages, if we are any way *concerned* in them, and so it may to know the Clock has struck One, if I have appointed an *Assignment* at that time; but sure the *bare naked Theory* of the Clock having struck One, can add but little to the stock of my Intellectual Perfection. The most *trivial* matter of Fact in the World is worth knowing, if I have any *concern* depending upon it; and the *greatest* without that is utterly insignificant. So that 'tis not from the *perfecting* of our *Understanding*, but from the *Relation* they have to our *Interest*, that these things deserve to be known.

## XXXVIII.

This is sufficiently plain from the Measure we have premised, by which no Truth is perfective of the Understanding but only *Necessary Truth*. But to address my self more Convincingly to the great Magnifiers of *History*, I shall only desire their Answer to this one Question. Suppose such and such Matters of Fact, on the Knowledge of which they Found their Title to Learning, and perhaps glory more in the *Knowing* them, than the *Authors* themselves

themselves did in the *doing* them. Suppose, I say, such matters of Fact had never been *done*; suppose *Fabius* had never Weather'd out *Hannibal* by *Delays*; nor *Cyrus* took *Babylon* by draining the River into the Ditches, what loss or diminution would this have been to the Perfection of their Understandings? They cannot say it would have been any. And why then should the knowing them now they *are* done, be reckoned as an Intellectual Improvement? And yet we find that 'tis so, and that Men study these things not only for their *use*, (for that I allow) but for their meer *Theory*, placing Learning in *such* History, which has nothing to commend it, but only that it tells you such and such things were done. Of this impertinent sort is the greatest part of the *Roman* and *Grecian* History, which (had not the World *Voted* it for *Learning*) would no more concern a Man to know, than that a Bird has dropt a Feather upon the *Pyrenean* Mountains.

#### XXXXIX.

Again, it goes for a Notable Piece of Learning to understand *Chronology*, to be able to adjust the Intervals and distances of Time, to know when such an Action was done, when such a Famous Man flourish'd, and who and who were contemporary, and the like. Now I deny not, but that while Men live in this World, they may be *concern'd* to have some acquaintance with these things, by reason of some interest or other that depends upon it. It may therefore, I say, for some purposes, be convenient to know that. For instance, there is a twofold *Ara* (or date) of the Victory at *Actium*, the one reckon'd from the Fight at the Promontory of *Actium*, according to the account

account of *Dio* and *Xiphilinus*; the other from the taking of *Alexandria*, and the Death of *Cleopatra*, according to *Ptolemy*, *Josephus*, *Eusebius*, and *Censcrinus*. But however, concerning this may be, with respect to its *usefulness*, yet certainly as to any *Intellectual Perfection* that accrues by it, it must needs be a very *unedifying Stuffage* of Mind; and yet 'tis counted a great Accomplishment and *Enrichment* of it.

## XL.

Another thing there is which passes for wonderful Learning, which I cannot well reduce either to *Necessary* or *Contingent Truth*; for indeed it does not belong to *Truth* at all, and that is our *Sophistical* way of Disputation. And indeed it may well be called so, for as 'tis generally managed, 'tis nothing but meer Quibbling and Jestling, not *Arguing* but *Punning*. For suppose the Question be, Whether he that has Faith shall be saved? No, says the Opponent, If the Damned have Faith, then not every one that has Faith shall be saved; But the Damned have Faith. Therefore, &c. Here 'tis plain that the Word *Faith*, though it hath *Something* in Common in both Propositions, yet according to the *intire Idea*, signifies one thing in one Proposition, and another in another. And why then is not the whole Procedure to be rejected as Idle and Impertinent? As for *down-right* Fallacy and Equivocation, where there is a *Manifest Ambiguity* (as between *Dog* and *Dog*, one signifying a Celestial Sign, and the other a Terrestrial Animal) this is every where despised and laught at as unbecoming both the *Acumen* and the *Gravity* of a Disputant. And we think we have sufficiently discharged

charged our Hands of such an Argument, by Crying out that there are *Four terms* in the *Syllogism*. But now I would fain know whether it be not the same to all real purposes in the foremention'd Instance, which is after the common way of our *Scholastick* Disputation? Is not *Faith* and *Faith* there, as much an Ambiguity as *Dog* and *Dog* here? For my part I can perceive but this only Difference, that *Dog* and *Dog* have nothing in Common but the *Name*, whereas *Faith* and *Faith* have some *Generical* Part wherein they agree. But what does this mend the Matter? For tho there be some *Generical* Agreement, yet take 'em according to their *whole Ideas*, that is, take the *Generical* part with its *Contracting Difference*, and 'tis plain that they signify two different things, and consequently that there is really as great an Ambiguity *here* as *there*. And this we plainly Confess when we come to *Distinguish*. For what is a *Distinction* but a *Pointing* out of an *Ambiguity*? What is it else but to say, that such a thing is True in *this* Sense, but not in *that*, True in that Sense wherein the *Point* of the Question is *not concern'd*, but not in that wherein it *is*. No? why then, notwithstanding the *Generical* Agreement the Procedure is as fallacious and impertinent, as when the *Question* being about *Star-Dog*, the *Opposition* is about *Land-Dog*. And yet (such is the Inconsistency of Human Judgment) the one is counted *Trifling*, and the other *Serious Arguing*. Whereas indeed no Arguing can be so, but where the Terms of the Question are first *Defined* (as is done in *Geometry*) and then always used according to the first *Stated* Sense. All Disputing any otherwise than so, must necessarily be nothing else

else but meer *Punning*; only much worse than what is in common use, because 'tis *Punning* when a Man Pretends to be *Serious*. And yet this is made a considerable Part of our Academical *Education* and *Learning*; and he is esteemed the greatest Proficient, who is most versed in this Fallacious *Trickish* way of Disputing, and is arrived to the greatest *Sleight of Hand* in this Philosophical *Juggle*, which notwithstanding all that Credit and Reputation it has had among the Professors of Learning, both in our own, and in other Universities, I take to be so far from being any real substantial part of Learning, that 'tis one of the greatest Abuses and Corruptions of it, and is one of the first things that I should offer to be Reformed at a *Philosophick Visitation*.

## XLI.

For this Scholastick way of Disputing may be considered, either as an *Acquirement*, or as an *Exercise*, and either way (as 'tis usually managed) it will be found to be no better than a Pompous Trifle. If you consider it as an *Acquirement*, 'tis nothing else but an Habit, or rather a Trick of seeming to prove something, when really you prove nothing. And I think Monsieur *Gassendi* in his *Paradoxical Exercitations* has given a true Image and Representation of it, when he tells of the *Six Eggs* which the Country-man Ordered to be provided for the Entertainment of his Son, when he return'd home from the University. The Father would have him boyl Six Eggs, two for him, two for his Mother, and two for himself. But the Son, having an Itch to shew a Proof of his Scholastick Improvement, boyl'd but three. When his Father asked him, Why he had not

provided Six? Why, says he, are there not here Six? How so? says the Father, I can see but three. No, replies the young Sophister, is not here one (telling them out) and is not there two, and is not there three? And don't 1, 2, and 3, make Six? Well, says the Father, then I'll take two, and your Mother shall have one, and you shall have the other three. And now I think all was right and as it should be. The Son for his part gave a true *Specimen* of his University Learning: (For in earnest I don't take our vulgar way of Disputing to be one Jot better than this piece of *Egg-Sophistry*) and the Father served him very well, and in his kind; that is, shew'd him Trick for Trick.

## XLII.

Not is there any thing more in it considered as an *Exercise*. As the Acquirement *has* nothing in it, so the Exercise *contributes* to nothing. As the Former is an insignificant worthless *Habit*, so the Latter is an idle fruitless *Employment*. As it springs from Nothing, so it tends to Nothing, but is all over *Shuffle* and *Legerdemain*. It does not discover one Truth, nor enlarge any one Science. It serves neither to clear the Mind, nor to clear the Argument, but rather to *snarl* and perplex both. The Truth is, I can find nothing in this so magnified Exercise but *Punning* and *Canting*. *Punning* I call using Words in *various* Senses: *Canting* I call using Words *without* any real Sense or Notion under them: And these two I believe will go near to divide our Scholastick Exercises between them. For as far as I could ever observe for thirteen years together, this great Mystery of Disputation is nothing else but a meer *Tossing* of Words



Words backward and forward, sometimes without any meaning, which is *Canting*; and sometimes with more Meanings than one, which is *Punning*. Upon which Consideration I must needs own (whether it be my Ignorance or no, I can't tell) that I had ever a very mean Opinion of this sort of *School Errantry*, and that I always thought the Time spent at the Publick Schools to be as much *Loitering*, as that in the *Tennis-Court*.

## XLIII.

I could here run out much further, but that I find my self prevented by the Excellent Monsieur *Robault*, who in his Preface to his Philosophy gives this true Account of this whole Business, *That it is not a way to the Acquisition of New Truths, as such intended, but only a sort of Exercise or Sport of the Mind, whose end is nothing else but only to mix and intangle Truth with Falsehood, by the help of some little Tricks and Quirks, by which either side of the Question may be maintain'd, and neither of the Litigants seem to yield, tho the Propositions they hold be never so Absurd, and the Reason to the contrary never so Strong. And truly this is the Ordinary Issue of all Publick Exercises, where oftentimes in the same Chair contrary Opinions are disputed by turns, and are equally Victorious, while in the mean time the matter is not at all cleared, and Truth lies as near the bottom of the Well as it did before. This is the true state of the matter, and I am glad to find so great an Authority on my side, not so much to Confirm the Truth, as to take off from the Singularity and Boldness of the Censure. And to this I add this further Remark, that 'tis reckon'd a notable Excellence to be able to Spin out an Argument to a great length, and he is counted the best Arguer* that

that can thus *Pun* longest. Whereas indeed did a Man speak to the *purpose*, *Brevity* would be his greatest Excellence.

## XLIV.

There are many other things which the unaccountable humour of the World has *turn'd up* for Learning, which *Ignorance* will never be the better for, and which *Wisdom* does not need. Thus 'tis counted Learning to have tumbled over a multitude of Books, especially if *great* ones, and *old* ones, and *obscure* ones, but most of all, if *Manuscripts*; the recovery of one of which is reckoned so much added to the *Commonwealth* of Learning, as they call it. A *Well-read* Man signifies the very same as a *Learned* Man in most *Mens Dictionaries*; and by *Well-read* they don't mean one that has read *well*, that has clear'd & improv'd his Understanding by his reading, but only one that has read a *great deal*, tho perhaps he has puzzled and confounded his Notions by doing so. Thus again it goes for Learning, to be acquainted with *Mens Opinions*, especially of the *Ancients*, to know what this or that Philosopher held, what this or that Author says, tho perhaps he says nothing but what is either *Absurd*, or *Obviously True*. Thus for instance, What can be more Absurd than that *Fancy* of *Empedocles*, that there are two *Semicircles* compassing betwixt them and the Earth, one whereof was composed of Fire, the other of Air, and that the former made the Day, and the latter Night? And yet to know this is *Learning*. And what again is more obviously true, than that *Grave Doctrin* of *Aristotle*, that *Privation* must go before the introduction of the *Form* in all Generation? And yet 'tis Learning to know that

he taught thus, though it be a thing so plain, and so *near the Surface*, that a Child can't miss of it. To know the thing is nothing, because so plain and easie; but to know that *Aristotle* held it, that's the Learning. Nay, to instance in a matter of a greater difficulty, though I know very well, and am able to demonstrate the grounds of the *Atomical Philosophy*, or the Motion of the Earth, or the Circulation of the Blood, yet I shall not be admitted into the Order of the Learned, unless I am able to tell that *Moscos* the *Phanician* invented the first, and that *Democritus* and *Leucippus* afterwards improved it, and that the two latter owe their Discovery to *Copernicus* and *Harvey*. So much more Learned an Achievement, is it to know *Opinions* than things; and accordingly, those are reckon'd the most Learned Authors, who have given the greatest Specimens of this kind of Knowledge. Thus is *Petrus Mirandula* more admired for the Examination he has made of the Doctrin of the *Pagans*, than any of *them* were for what they delivered; and *Plutarch* has got more Credit from the History he gives of their Opinions, in the Second Tome of his Works, than from any of his Rational and Moral Discourses. And were he not accounted *Learned* for the *Former*, I question whether the *Latter*, (though far more excellent than they are) would ever have given him that Title.

## XLV.

Now (*Madam*) what an hard and unreasonable Imposition is this, that tho I am able to think and *Write* never so much like an Angel my self, yet I must not be accounted a Man of *Learning*, unless I can tell what every whimsical Writer

has

has said before me! And how hard will this fall upon those, whose lot is to breath in the *last* Ages of the World, who must be accountable for all the Whims and Extravagancies of so many *Centuries*? And yet this is made so great a part of Learning, that the Learning of most Men lies in *Books* rather than in *Things*; and among Authors, where one writes upon *Things*, there are twenty that write upon *Books*. Nay, some have carried this odd Humour on so far, that 'tis thought Learning to know the very *Titles* of Books, and their several *Editions*, with the time and place, when and where they were Printed. And I have met with several my self, that have valued themselves not a little upon this *Mechanical* faculty, though they knew no more of what was in them, than they do of what is written in the *Rolls of Destiny*.

## XLVI.

From this placing of Learning in the Knowledge of Books, proceeds that ridiculous Vanity of *Multiplying Quotations*, which is also reckon'd another piece of Learning, though they are used so unseasonably and impertinently, that there can be no other end in them, but only to shew that the Author has *read* such a Book. And yet 'tis no such Convincing Evidence of that neither, it being neither *New* nor *Difficult*, for a Man that's resolv'd upon it, to quote such Authors as he never *Read* nor *Saw*. And were it not too *Odious*, as well as *Obvious* a Truth, I could name to your *Ladyship*, some of those *Author-Mongers*, who yet pass for Men of shrewd Learning, and vast Reading.

These, and many other such things (for 'twere endless to reckon up all) are by the Majority of the World Voted for Learning, and in these we spend our Education, our Study, and our Time, though they are all of them *Contingent Truths*, that are not *Perfective* of the Understanding, (nothing being so but only *Necessary Truths*, or the *Divine Ideas*, the *Eternal λόγος*, the *Word* and *Wisdom* of the Father) and also most of them *impertinent* and *unconcerning* ones. So that in short, the Charge of this Reflection amounts to thus much, That Learning is generally placed in the Knowledge of such things, which neither the *Intellectual Perfection*, or any other *Interest* of Man is concern'd to know.

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*The End of the First Reflection.*

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The

## The Second Reflection.

*Wherein the General Conduct of Human Life is taxed, for using undue and irregular Methods, in Prosecuting what is really Perfective of the Understanding.*

### I.

IN the preceeding Reflection, the Intellectual Conduct of Human Life was censured for the general *Misplacing* of Learning, for placing it in such things as are not *Perfective* of the Understanding. In the present Reflection supposing it to be Free from that Fault, we shall consider it as Chargeable with another, namely, with an *undue and irregular Method* of prosecuting what is really perfective of it. The first was an Error about the *End*; This Second is an Error about the *Means*, which are the two Hinges upon which all *Prudence*, and all *Imprudence* turns.

### II.

That the Truth of this Charge may appear, we must here also propose a *Measure*, whereby we may proceed, as we did in the Former Reflection. And as there we took upon us to determine what that is which is *Objectively perfective* of the *Understanding*, so we must here consider what is the *Right Method* of *Prosecuting* what is so. Which being stated will be a Measure to us in this, as the other was in the former Reflection.

## III.

I design not here a just and particular Treatise concerning *The Method of Study, or Inquiry after Truth*, this Province being already Professedly undertaken, and Excellently adorn'd by two as great Masters of Thinking as ever were, or are like to be in the World, *Cartesius* and *Malebranche*, of both which your *Ladyship* is so much a *Mistress*, that a further Undertaking of this kind would be as needless to your better Information, as to the Argument it self, after the Management of it under such Excellent Hands, However something I must say, it being impossible to shew that wrong Methods are used in this *Grand Inquest*, but by predefining which is the *Right*. This therefore I shall do, but *briefly* only, and in *General*.

## IV.

Since therefore that Truth which is Perfective of the Understanding is *Necessary Truth*, and since this *Necessary Truth* is the same with the Divine Ideas (both which being already proved, are here supposed) following the Thred of the same Hypothesis, I find it necessary to affirm, that the right, and indeed only Method of Enquiry after that Truth, which is perfective of the Understanding, is by Consulting the *Ideal World*, where only it is, or the Divine *Being*, who says of himself that he is not only the *Truth*, but also the *Way*.

## V.

Here I suppose two things. First that this Divine *Being*, or *Ideal World* is intimately united with, and presential to the Mind. Secondly, That we see and understand all things in him,

him, That he is our *Light* and our *Wisdom*, the *Light* by which we See, and the *Light* which we See, that he is the very λόγος ἐν ἡμῖν, the inward Word and substantial Conception of our Minds, as he is of the Father, and that in this Sense he enlightens every Man that comes into the World. This I need not prove now, because I have done it professedly elsewhere, only I shall pass one necessary Remark upon the manner of our being enlightned by the Divine λόγος, who may be said to enlighten us in a double respect, either *Fundamentally* and *Potentially*, by putting us into a *Capacity* of Illumination, by his intimate Union and Presence with us; or else *Effectually* and *Actually*, when we attend to his Divine Light, which is always present to us, tho we are not so to it. In the Former Sense he enlightens every Man, in the latter only those who duly consult him and attend to him.

Vid. Reason and Religion.

## VI.

For I consider, that the Divine λόγος, is an *Inlightner* in the same Proportion as he is a *Redeemer*. Now he redeems us either by putting us in a Salvable and Reconcilable State, which is a *Redemption Universal Inconditionate* and *Antecedent*, or by actually reconciling and Saving us, which depends upon, and is consequent to certain Conditions, and is conferr'd only upon those who are qualified accordingly. And as his *Redemption* is double, so is his *Illumination*. He enlightens either by putting us in a state or possibility of *Illumination*, by being intimately present with us, and surrounding us with his Divine *Ideal Light*, which is a Benefit Common to all, or by actually informing our Understandings when



when we apply our selves with due attention to his all-diffused Light, which is ever present to us, and to the whole Creation, and *Shineth* even  
 John 1. 5. *in the Darknes, tho the Darknes comprehend it not.*

## VII.

And I was not a little glad to find the Grounds of this distinction in the Writings of that Elevated Heathen *Hierocles*, which I shall give you in the Words of my own Translation. This bright Heathen Commenting upon that Mystical Prayer of *Pythagoras*, O Father Jupiter, either free all from their manifold Evils, or else discover to all what *Dæmon* they use, Moves this Question, Since they that know God and themselves are free from Mortal Passions, why then are not all free, since all are sufficiently assisted with the Opportunities of this Knowledge? To which he first gives this general Answer, Because the greatest part of Men embrace evil of their own accord, since they neither see nor hear neighbouring good. Then a little after he is more particular in this account. Since therefore (says he) that any thing may be shewn to any one, 'tis necessary that the Actions of two Persons concur; (for how can you shew what you have a mind should be shewn, to a Blind Man, although you offer it to him a thousand times? Or how can you shew to one that sees, if you offer nothing to his sight?) both these must be present, some good proposed by him that shews, and an Eye capable of seeing in him to whom it is to be shewn; so that from a visible Object, and a faculty of seeing, may result a Manifestation. This being so, let us suppose that all would be freed from evil, if their Maker did shew to all the knowledge of his own Nature, and what *Dæmon* they themselves use. But we find that

P. 144.

P. 146.

all are not delivered from evil; it follows therefore that he does not make this discovery to all, but to those only who of their own accord endeavour to free themselves from evil, and voluntarily fix their Eye upon what is shewn by the intention of Contemplation. And again a little after, Thus every Illumination of God by the Concurrence of our Vision, becomes a Discovery. P. 148.

## VIII.

In all which Process this refined Heathen supposes that God is ready on his part to enlighten all Men; nay, that he does enlighten them all so far, as to put them in the way, and within the Possibility of Illumination, which then becomes *Actual* and *Effectual* when they yield due Attention to the Divine Light. He does not indeed descend to so much Nicety and Particularity as to ascribe this Illumination to the Divine *Nature*, or *Ideal World*, but only to God in general; nor does he determine whether God does enlighten us only *Efficiently*, by infusing Acts or Habits of Knowledge (as is more vulgarly held, than understood, and indeed is no way intelligible) or *formally* by being himself the very Formal Light of our Minds, and the immediate Object of our Knowledge. This I say he does not determine, nor do I cite him to this purpose, having sufficiently Explained and Established this Theory elsewhere, but only to shew his Concurrence with me in this Distinction of the double Illumination of God. Reason and Religion.

## IX.

These Supposals being premised, First, that that Truth which is Perfectiv of the Understanding, is *Necessary Truth*: Then Secondly, that

Col. 2. 3.

that this Necessary Truth is the same with the Divine Ideas; then Thirdly, that the Divine  $\lambda\gamma\theta$ , or Ideal World, is intimately united with, and Presential to the Mind; then Fourthly, that we see and understand all things in him, and that 'tis he that is our Inlightner; and that lastly, though he inlightens all *Fundamentally* and *Potentially*, yet this Illumination is not reduced to *Act*, and made *Effectual*, but by the intervening of some Condition on our parts, which is duty to consult and apply our selves to him. From these Premises the same Conclusion which we touched on before, necessarily and evidently follows, that the Right and only Method of Enquiry after that Truth which is Perfective of the Understanding, is to consult the Divine  $\lambda\gamma\theta$ , or Ideal World. For this is the Region of Truth, and here are *hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge*. This is that great and Universal Oracle lodged in every Man's Breast, whereof the Ancient *Urim* and *Thummim* was an Expressive Type or Emblem. This is *Reason*, this is *Conscience*, this is *Truth*, this is that *Light Within* so *Darkly* Talked of, by some who have by their aukward, untoward, and *Unprincipled* way of representing it, discredited one of the Noblest Theories in the World. But the thing in it self rightly understood is true; and if any shall yet call it *Quakerism*, or *Enthusiasm*, I shall only make this reply at present, that 'tis such *Quakerism* as makes a good part of Saint *John's* Gospel, and of Saint *Austin's* Works. But to return, this, I say, is that *Divine Oracle* which we all may, and must consult, if we would enrich our Minds with Truth, that Truth which is Perfective

fective of the Understanding: And this is the true Method of being truly wise. And this is no other Method, than what is advised us by this Divine λόγος, the Substantial Wisdom of God.

Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my Gates, waiting at the posts of my doors. And again, says the same Substantial Wisdom, Who so is simple, let him turn in hither. And again, I am the light of the world, he that follows me, or (as the word more properly signifies) he that consorts or keeps Company with me, walketh not in darkness. This therefore is *Via Intelligentia*, the Way and Method of true Knowledge to apply our selves to the Divine λόγος, to consult the Ideal World.

Prov. 8. 34.

C. 9. 4.

Joh. 8. 12.

## X.

Thus in general. If now it be further demanded how this is to be done; I answer, that there are three ways of doing it, and I can think of no more. The First is by *Attention*. The second is, by *Purity* of Heart and Life. And the Third is, by *Prayer*. Upon each of which I shall bestow few Remarks, such as may rather give *hints* than *full entertainment* to your thoughts, because I know your Ladyship loves to have something left to *work out* by your self in your own private Meditations. Which Consideration has made me all along use less Prolixity than the *Quaintness* and *Weightiness* of my Argument would otherwise justify.

## XI.

The First Method assigned, is *Attention*, or Application of Mind to the Intelligible World, the World of Truth, which Mr. *Malebranche* calls the Natural Prayer of the Soul to God for further

ther Illumination. For indeed it is a silent Address and Application of the Soul to the Fountain of Light and Truth; 'tis an Interrogation of the Divine Oracle, the Eternal Word of God, and a patient and quiet waiting upon him for an Answer; 'tis in one Word, a Vertual Mental Prayer, an act of Intellectual Devotion to the Father of Lights, and such as, if more expressly utter'd and unfolded, bespeaks him in the Words of the Royal Supplicant, *Give me Wisdom the strength by thy Throne.* This is the same with Thinking or Speculating, which if intelligibly accounted for, will be found to be nothing else but the Conversion of the Mind to the Ideal World, or Omniformity of the Divine Essence; which as it is the *First*, so is it also the *Directest* and most Compendious Method of Science. For this is to go directly to the *Spring-head*, to the *Lucid Fountain* of Good, 'tis to take hold of Essential Truth *nakedly* as it is in it self (as a very Contemplative Person expresses it) 'tis to fix the Eye of the Mind upon the *Intellectual Sun*, upon him who is Substantial Truth, and the Light of the World. Which must needs be the most ready way to be enlightned. For the more heedfully we attend to the Ideal World, the more we shall see and discover of it; and not only so, but also more clearly *distinguish* what we do discover. For for Man that casts a short careless Glance upon the *Galaxy*, sees only a *Confused Whiteness* arising from the numerous mixture of little Splendors: But when the same Person fixes his Eye with steadiness and delay of Application, he begins to discern something more distinctly, a new Star ever and anon arises under his inspection, not discovered

Tauler  
Serm. 3.  
Pasch.

versed before, and still the longer and harder he looks, the more he discerns, till at length he has discovered as much as he can well attend to at once, and has satiated his Faculty with the *Brightness* and *Multitude* of Light. The Application is as Obvious, as the Figure is Pertinent, and therefore I shall only remark this one thing more upon this part, that this was the Method of the first Inventors of *Arts* and *Sciences*, who made their way into the Coasts of Learning by meer dint of *Thinking*; and further, that this is the very Method that has been used by the greatest Improvers of them ever since, such as *Bacon*, *Boyle*, *Descartes*, *Galileus*, *Harvey*, *Mersennus*, *Digby*, *Malebranche*, *Poiret*, and (whom I name with particular Honour and Reverence) our Excellent Friend Dr. *More*. All these must be allowed, and I think are to be, great Improvers of Learning, and that 'twas by this Method they did it. And I dare *Prophesie*, that if ever any extraordinary Advancement be for the future made in the World, 'twill be done by *Thinking*.

## XII.

This as to *Thinking* in General. But now as to the Order of *Thinking*, if your Ladyship can be supposed to need any Instruction about it, I cannot recommend you to a better Tutor than your Friend *M. Malebranche*, in his Second Part of his Sixth Book of Inquiry after Truth, where he purposely describes the *Method* of *Thinking*, which you may remember he reduces to these few following Rules.

## XIII.

The first Law is, That Evidence be maintained in our Reasonings. From this Principle depends

this

this general Law concerning the Matter of our Studies, *That we ought not to Reason but only of those things whereof we have clear Ideas, and by Necessary Consequence, That we ought always to begin with the most simple and easie things, and also to dwell long upon them, before we advance to the acquisition of things more Complex and Difficult.*

## XIV.

Upon the same general Principle, depend the Laws concerning the manner whereby we are to Proceed in the Solution of Questions. The first of which Laws is this, *That the state of the Question to be solved, is to be most distinctly Conceived.* Besides, the Ideas of the Terms ought to be distinct, that they be compared with one another, and that the Relations which are sought for, may be Known.

## XV.

But when the Relations of things to one another cannot be Known by immediately Comparing them, then the Second Law is, *that we should employ our thoughts to find out one or more middle Ideas, which we may use as a common Measure to Know by their Help the Relations that are between those things.* And withal he advises that we should study to have those Ideas clear and distinct, proportionably to the Accuracy and Numerousness of those Relations which we endeavour to comprehend.

## XVI.

But when the Questions are Difficult, and require a long Examination, then the third Law is, *that from the matter in hand all those things should be removed whose examination is not necessary to the discovery of the sought for Truth.* Because the Capacity

capacity of the Mind is not to be without reason divided, but all its force is to be employed about those things from which it may perceive Light. And all those things which can be removed, and which be removed, the Question remains intire; they are the things that do not belong to the Question.

## XVII.

When the Question is included within a few Terms, then the Fourth Rule is, *That the matter of our Meditation is to be divided by parts, and those parts to be handled singly according to their Natural Order, by beginning with the more Simple, that is, with those which include fewest Relations. And that we should not pass on to the more Complex, till the more Simple be distinctly known, and rendered familiar.*

## XVIII.

When by Meditation these things become Familiar to us, then the Fifth Rule is, *That the Ideas of all these are to be Contracted, and disposed in the Imagination, or to be written down in Paper, that they may no longer fill the Capacity of the Mind.* This Rule, though always useful, yet he makes it necessary only in the most difficult Questions, which require a great Capacity of Mind. And he says withal, that the use of this and the following Rules, is not to be Accurately known but only in *Algebra*.

## XIX.

When the Ideas of all things necessary to be consider'd, are clear, familiar, contract, and orderly digested in the Imagination, or expressed in Paper; then the Sixth Law is, *That all things are to be Compared or Collated according to the*  
Laws



*Laws of Combination, alternately among one another, either by the sole Intuition of the Mind, or by the Intuition of the Imagination, joyn'd with the Intuition of the Mind, or by the Calculation of the Pen, joyn'd with the Attention of the Mind and of the Imagination.*

## XX.

If none of all those Relations which result from all those Collations, be that which is sought after, then again from all those Relations those are to be removed which are of no use to the Solution of the Question: And the others are to be made Familiar, to be Contracted, and to be orderly disposed in the Imagination, or expressed in Paper, and to be compared with each other, according to the Law of Combination: And then we are to see whether the Compound Relation which is sought for by any one of all those Compound Relations which result from these new Comparisons.

## XXI.

If none of those found Relations include the Solution of the Question, then again from all those Relations, the unserviceable are to be cast away, the other are to be made familiar, &c. And by proceeding in this manner, the Truth or Relation sought for, be it never so Complex, will at last be found, provided we are able sufficiently to extend the Capacity of our Mind, by Contracting Ideas, and that in all our Operations we always attend to the End and Scope which is to be arrived at. For in every step of this Intellectual Progress, we ought to have our Eye perpetually fixed upon the State of the Question. To all which he adds one Caution more, that we should beware lest we should sit down Contented with  
a false

a false Light or Appearance, and so be deceived. And that therefore our Collations in order to the finding out the Truth we look after, be so often repeated, till we can no longer withhold our assent without being secretly chid and reprehended by a certain *Master* Answering from *within* to our Questions, that is, to our Labour, Application of Mind, and Desire of Heart. By which *Master within* this admirable Theorist can mean nothing else but the Divine  $\lambda\gamma\Theta$ , or *Ideal World*, that Universal Oracle of Mankind, and of all the Intelligent Creation.

This is a short View of those Laws which the Excellent M. *Malebranche* has given concerning the *Method of Thinking*. And I believe if an Angel had been engaged in the undertaking, he could not have given *Better*. They are all Natural, Clear, Distinct, Easie, and depending; few enough not to *burthen* or *distract* the Mind, and yet many enough to *inform* it. And therefore I shall not be guilty of so much *Presumption* and *Impertinence* as to prescribe any other, thinking it sufficient to consider and practise these. And so much for the first way of Consulting the *Ideal World*, which is by Thinking.

## XXIII.

The second way is by Purity of Heart and Life. This I confess has a more immediate and special influence upon the Knowledge of *Spiritual* and *Moral* Truths, according to that of our Saviour, *If any man will do his will, he shall know* Joh. 7. 17. *of the Doctrin, &c.* and that of his Prime Apostle, *The Animal man perceiveth not the things of God,* 1 Cor. 2. 14. *&c.* But its Efficacy is not confined here, but has a larger Sphere of activity, and serves to the discovery

covery even of all *Ideal* or *Necessary Truth*. For as Viciousness not only proceeds from Ignorance, but also *causes* it, by besotting and clouding the Understanding; so Purity of Heart and Life not only proceeds from Light and Knowledge, but also produces it, and helps the Soul to see more Clearly and Distinctly. Hence the Pythagorick and Platonick *καθαρσις*, the Method of Purification and Purgation so much talk'd of by *Pyrrhus*, *Iamblicus*, *Plotinus*, and particularly by *Hierocles* in his Introduction to his Noble Comment, where he has these Words, *As a blind Eye cannot behold a very bright Object till it be Purged, so a Soul not yet Clarified and refined by Virtue is unqualified to gaze upon the Beauty of Truth*. And the same Method is no less recommended in Scri-

1. *Wisd. 4.* pture, *Wisdom will not enter into a Polluted Spirit*,  
*Dan. 12.* says the Wise Man. And says the Angel to *Daniel*,  
 10. *Many shall be Purified and made white, and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.* And says the Psalmist, *I am wiser than the Aged, because I keep thy Commandments.*  
 Psal. 119. And to this purpose also is that of our Lord to be  
 Joh. 8. 12. understood, *He that follows me, that is, that lives after my Example, Walketh not in Darkness.* The Purity of his Heart will be a Light to his Understanding,

## XXIV.

But to represent this more distinctly, there are two ways whereby Purity of Heart serves to the acquirement of Knowledge. By *Natural Efficacy*, and by the *Divine Grace* and *Benediction*. And First, It does it by Natural Efficacy, either by *clarifying the medium*, or by *assisting the faculty*. The former I conceive and represent after this manner.

manner. I suppose in the first place that the Soul sees through a *Medium*: Secondly, That this *Medium* is our *Terrestrial Vehicle*: Thirdly, That the *Grossness* of this *Medium* *binds* the *Vision* of the Soul. All which I ground upon those Words of the Apostle, *Now we see through a Glass, darkly.* 1 Cor. 13. 12.

## XXV.

This Supposed, it follows that whatsoever clarifies this *Medium* does also help the *Vision* of the Soul. And this *Purity* does, especially that more Eminent part of it, which consists in *Chastity* and *Temperance*. For first, It composes the *Passions*, especially that of *Lust*, by that the *Animal Spirit*, and by that the *Blood*. For the Motion of the *Passions* Ferments the *Spirits*, and the Fermentation of the *Spirits* agitates the *Blood*, and by agitation raises all the feculent and drossie parts of it; and makes it like a troubled Fountain thick and muddy. And this I take to be one true reason why Men in any *Passion* can't reason so clearly as when they are in more quiet and *silence* of Spirit. But now by *Purity* of Heart all this disturbance is allay'd and compos'd, the *Passions* are becalm'd, the *Spirits* fix'd, the Fountain of the *Blood* clears up, and so all the *inner* part of that *Glass* the Apostle speaks of, becomes more bright and pellucid, more apt to transmit the *Rays* of the *Ideal Light*, and consequently we see more clearly through it. Tho it be still but *Darkly* in comparison of what we shall do hereafter.

## XXVI.

But this is not all; This *Purity* does also Clarify the *outward* part of the *Glass* too. First, By *Consequence*, because the finer the *Spirits* and *Blood*

are, the finer will be the Threads of the outward Veil also. Then more *directly*, because Temperance does refine and subtilize the Texture of the Body, diminishes from its Bulk and Grossness, and unloads the Soul of a good part of that Burthen, which not only presses down her *Aspirations*, but also hinders her *Sight*: And besides, it refines the inner part too, by bringing in fresh Supplies of fine Spirits. This was that Temperance which Dan. i. 15. made the Faces of *Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah*, look *Clear and Fair*, and which made them *Wise* too, gave a quick and delicate Air to their Countenances, and let in the Light of the Ideal World upon their Souls. This was the Philosophical Temperance of the *Pythagoreans*, which (to use the Words of Dr. *More* Commenting upon that Place) *is the Mother of that Wisdom which makes the Face to shine, and nourishes the Laciform Vehicle of the Soul.*

## XXVII.

And as this Purity does Clarifie the Medium, so does it also *Assist* the Faculty. And this it does by the same general way whereby it clarifies the Medium, that is, by composing the Passions. For the Passions not only trouble and thicken the Medium (as was noted and explain'd before) but also *divide and disperse* the Faculty. For the more things a man *desires*, the more things he will be engaged to *think* upon; and the more things he thinks upon at once, the more languid and confused will his Conception be. But now this Purity by composing the Passions contracts the Desires, and by contracting the Desires, it contracts also by consequence the Thoughts, and by this the Man is reduced to a greater *Unity, Simplicity*, and

*Recollection* of Mind; and having but few Thoughts to divide him, he is the better enabled to think *clearly* and *distinctly*.

## XXVIII.

And thus have I given a clear and distinct Account how Purity of Heart serves to the Acquirement of Knowledge by a *Natural Efficacy*. This it does also Secondly, by the *Divine Grace* and *Benediction*. Purity of Heart is that *Heavenly Love* which invites not only the Holy Spirit, but also the Divine  $\lambda\beta\gamma\delta$ , to come and dwell in the Soul, and to enrich it with his *Ideal* Communications. This we may be assured of from his own mouth, *He that loveth me, shall be loved of Joh. 14.2.* my Father, and I will love him, and manifest my self to him. And again, *If a man love me, my Father Ver. 23.* will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. The pure, chaste and good Soul shall not only be loved by the Divine  $\lambda\beta\gamma\delta$ , but be also of his Council and Privacy. For this is the *Spouse* of the *Word Eternal*, who first assumed *Innocent Nature*, and then assumes *innocent Persons*, the first by a *Natural*, the second by a *Mystick Union*. This is the *Beloved Disciple* who has the privilege to lean upon the Bosom of his Lord, and to be admitted to his most secret Communications. And therefore says the Psalmist, *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and Psal. 25.13* he will shew them his Covenant. And says our Lord himself, *Blessed are the Pure in Heart, for they shall see God*. And concerning the Four Children that refused to defile themselves with the Portion of the Kings Meat, it is said, that *God gave them Dan. 1.17.* Knowledge, and Skill in all Learning and Wisdom; and that *Daniel had understanding in all Visions and Dreams.*

*Dreams.* For they were not only Pure and Temperate, but Religiously so, in obedience to the Law of their God, the God of Israel. Which the said God rewarded with Knowledge and Skill in all Learning and Wisdom in them all, but in Daniel peculiarly, with a faculty of interpreting *Enigmatical Dreams and Visions*; as the Learned Dr. More observes in his excellent Comment upon that place,

Pag. 5.

## XXIX.

The third and last way of consulting the Ideal World is by *Prayer*. This is a method which the Scripture also advises us to: *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraiderh not, and it shall be given him.* And this we know was the method whereby the Wisest of Men attain'd his unparalleled Wisdom. For as Wisdom was his Choice, so the method of his seeking and gaining, it was by *Prayer*. And 'tis further observable that he addressed himself to the Divine  $\alpha\gamma\theta$ , or Ideal World in particular, as you may see in that solemn Prayer of his recorded in the Book of Wisdom, *give me Wisdom that sitteth by thy Throne, &c.* Which I commend to your *Ladyship's* perusal at leisure.

1 King. 3. 9.

## XXX.

And thus (Madam) have I *Defined* and by Scripture and Reason *Proved*, what is the Right Method of prosecuting that Truth which is perfective of the Understanding. This in general I have shewn to consist in *Consulting the Ideal World*; the manner of doing which I have also shewn to be, First, by *Thinking*; the Order of which is also defined. Secondly, by *Purity of Heart and Life*; and Lastly by *Prayer*. This I take

take to be *Via Intelligentia*, the Way and Method of Wisdom, whose *House* I think is *New Built*, tho not upon *Seven*, yet upon *Three Substantial Pillars*, and I should be glad if any one would be so kind as to shew me the Weakness of the Ground upon which they stand.

## XXXI.

And now (*Madam*) I think I need not use many Words to shew, that as Learning is generally placed in such things as are not perfective of the understanding, so that what is so is generally prosecuted by undue Methods. For 'tis but to compare the Methods in common use with that which we have premised and demonstrated, and you will immediately perceive the falseness and irregularity of them. For First, whereas the First and general Method of Wisdom and Knowledge, is by consulting the Divine *Light*, or Ideal World, the World of *Light*, that Light which enlightens every Man that comes into *this* World, the generality of *Students* don't so much as Dream of this, nor make any such Application, but apply themselves altogether to the *Ettyal* World, to the World of *Darkness* and *Obscurity*. I call it the World of *Darkness* and *Obscurity*, for 'tis most certain that this material World is not in it self either *Visible* or *Intelligible*, nor can any way act upon our Minds, much less can it teach or inform them. Body can never enlighten Spirit. It cannot represent it self to it, much less can it represent other things. For not being intimately united to the Mind, whatsoever Representation it shall be supposed to make, must be transacted by Ideas. But now Corporeal Ideas can never represent Intellectual Objects, nor can Bodies be



supposed to send forth any that are *Incorporated*. Whatever comes from Body must be of a Material Nature, and what is so, can be no apt Instrument to Illuminate the Mind. This Material World therefore (notwithstanding all that a Late Author has pleaded for our receiving our Ideas from our Senses) may be very truly and properly call'd the World of Darkness, as having no Light in it, nor being capable of producing any. The Ideal World is the true and only World of Light, and is therefore with a particular Emphasis call'd, *The Intelligible World*. As for the other, it is all throughout Darkness and Obscurity; and the God has placed a Sensible Light in it, or rather something that may be an occasional Cause of such a Sensation, yet as to any purpose of Intellectual Illumination, it is still a blind confused Chaos, and Darkness does still sit upon the Face of the Deep. And yet to this dark obscure World, which in it self is every whit as unintelligible as a *Non Ens*, do Men generally apply themselves for Light and Knowledge, without having any recourse to the true World of Light, the Ideal World: So verifying that complaint of God by the Prophet, *My People have forsaken me the Fountain of Living Waters, and have digg'd to themselves broken Cisterns, that will hold no Water.*

## XXXII.

Then again, whereas another more Particular Method is by *Attention* and *Thinking*, this is generally so little regarded, that no sort of Men think so little for the most part as they that are engaged in the Profest Study of Learning and Knowledge. This they don't reckon as any part of *Study*, nor as any Progress in the Stage of Learning,

Learning, but only as a *Graver* way of being *Idle*. 'Tis then only they *Study*, when they are hanging their Heads over an Old Musty *Folio*, and are Making huge *Common-places*, and stuffing their memories with *Grey Sentences*, and Venerable Sayings: And thus they spend their *Time* and their *Ink*, and having Scambled through a company of Books (most of which perhaps were *Written* to as little purpose, as they are *Read*) they think themselves *Learned Men*, and the World is too often their Opinion, tho they have not made themselves *Masters* of any *Sense* or *No-tion*, nor are able to demonstrate one single Truth upon solid Principles, and in a Consequential Process.

## XXXIII.

And this is the Method not only of those who *Misplace* Learning, but also of the most of those that place it *aright*. For even those that place it in *Ideal Truths*, do not generally *Think* for it, but *Read* for it; seek it not in their Souls, but in *Books*. And this methinks I can never sufficiently Wonder at. Indeed as for those that place Learning not in being able to frame Clear and Distinct Conceptions of ones *Own*, but in Knowing the Opinions of *Others*, 'tis no wonder that they take this Method; for tho it be Not a Means to the End they *should* propose, yet 'tis a Means to the End which they *do* propose. But the wonder is, how those that place Learning as they should, in the Clear Conception of *Ideal Truths*, should think to find this meerly by tumbling over Books.

## XXXIV.

## XXXIV.

I deny not but that *Reading* is One way of *Knowing* (otherwise I should not be at the Pains to write this to your Ladyship) but then 'tis only by *Accident* that it is so, as it gives hints and occasions for *Thinking*. And therefore *Thinking* is the only thing to be regarded even in *Reading* (for *Reading as such* is Nothing) and then we Read to most purpose, when we are thereby most enabled to *Think*. So that *Thinking* is the End of *Reading*, as Understanding is the End of *Thinking*. We ought therefore to Read only in order to *Thinking*. And yet this Method is generally so much inverted, that the main stress is laid upon *Reading*. Nothing but *Read, Read,* as long as Eyes and Spectacles will hold, not regarding whether the Head be *Clear*, so that it be full.

## XXXV.

As to the particular Order in *Thinking* proposed by M. *Malebranche*, I refer your Ladyship to the same Excellent Author, to shew you how much it is *transgressed*. Which he does at large, and to Wonderful Satisfaction, shewing first that the *School-Philosophers* do not observe that General Law concerning the matter of study, which is the cause of a great many Errors in their *Philosophy*. Then shewing that the second part of the General Law is not observed by the Common *Philosophers*, and what extraordinary advances *Cartesius* made in Learning by the exact observation of it. Then he proceeds, to explain the Principles of *Aristotle's Philosophy*, where he shews that he never observed the second Branch of the General Law, and reflects upon those Errors of his *Philosophy* occasioned by his not doing

so. But for a fuller account in these things I refer you to the Author himself.

XXXVI.

Then again, whereas *Purity* of Heart and Life is another Method of arriving to the Light and Knowledge of Ideal Truth, your *Ladyship* cannot but know, and 'tis as sad as well as a true Observation, that this is not only neglected among that part of Mankind that sit down contentedly in Ignorance, and aspire to no greater stock of Knowledge than what they brought with them into the World, but also among the generality of those few that addict themselves to the Cultivation and Improvement of their Minds. Nay these in proportion to their Number seem more guilty of this neglect than the other, and nothing so common as to see Men of Curious and Inquisitive Tempers, and of *famed* Learning, who yet are very Corrupt in the Moral state of their Minds, and live very ill Lives. Whence some have taken occasion to represent *Learning*, as an Enemy to *Religion*, and have cry'd up *Ignorance* as the *Mother* of *Devotion*. And tho the *Conclusion* of these Men be notoriously weak and absurd, yet it must be confess'd that the *Ground* upon which they build it is too true. Men *famed* for *Learning*, are oftentimes as *infamous* for *Living*; and many that study hard to furnish their *Heads*, are yet very negligent in purifying their *Hearts*, not considering that there is a *Moral*, as well as a *Natural* Communication between one and the other, and that they are concern'd to be pure in Heart and Life, not only upon the *Common Account*, in order to a happy state hereafter, but also in pursuance of their own particular way and end here.

XXXVII.

Then again Lastly, Whereas another Method of Wisdom is *Prayer*; I do not find that the generality of Students do at all apply themselves to this Method. Pray indeed ('tis to be hoped) they do for other things, which they think lie more out of their reach; but as for Learning and Knowledge, they think they can compass this well enough by their own proper Industry, and the help of good Books, without being beholden to the assistance of Heaven: And this, tho they do place Learning in the knowledge of *Necessary Truth*. Which procedure of theirs I cannot resolve into any other Principle, (I mean as to those that act by any) but the meer want of knowing or considering that this Necessary Truth is really the same with God himself. For did they attentively consider, That *God is Truth*, and that so much as they possess of Truth, so much they have of God, 'tis not to be imagined they should be so indifferent in using *Prayer*, or any of the other preceding Methods of Consulting God for his *own* Light.

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*The End of the Second Reflection.*

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## The Third Reflection.

*Wherein the General Conduct of Human Life is taxed with a too importunate, and over-earnest Pursuit after Knowledge in General.*

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HAVING passed over the two first Stages of the Intellectual Conduct of Human Life, that of the *End*, and that of the *Means*; and reflected upon the Irregularities of each, by shewing how both are generally mistaken and misplaced; I am now arrived to the Third and Last, which consists not in the choice of the *Object*, or of the *Method* to it (that belonging to the two former) but in the *Degree of Affection* where-with they are prosecuted. Which part of our Intellectual Conduct, as it is equally *Capable* of being faulty, so I shall here make it my business to shew that it is *actually* as faulty and irregular, if not more than either of the two former. And the fault that I tax it with, is, *A too importunate, and over-earnest pursuit after Knowledge in General.*

### II.

The Charge of this Reflection is of a *larger* compass and extent than either of the two Preceding; those being directed against such as either misplace the *Object*, or else mistake the *Method* of Learning and Knowledge; but this takes in both together, and others also not concerned  
in

in either of the former. For not only those that err in the placing of Learning, or in the method to it, but also those who are *Right* in both, come under the Censure of the present Reflection, they all agree in this, in being too importunate and vehement in the Pursuit of Knowledge.

## III.

Now in the making out the Truth of this Charge, we must here also, according to the Method observed in the two former Reflections, First lay down a common measure of proceeding, by stating the due Bounds of our present Affection to, and search after Knowledge: Or, How far it becomes Man to imploy himself in the Prosecution of Learning and Knowledge? The due stating of which Question, will be a certain direction to us in the Determination of this, Whether our general Inquest after Knowledge be immoderate or no. Now for the Determination of the first, it will be necessary to draw up the true State or Hypothesis of Man, according to the Posture wherein he now stands. Which I shall do distinctly in these following Considerations.

## IV.

First I consider, that the utmost Pitch of Knowledge Man by his utmost Endeavours can arrive to in this World is very inconsiderable.

God indeed has given us Reason enough to distinguish us from the *Brute* part of the Creation, and we may improve it so far as to distinguish our selves from *One another*, and so one Man may deserve to be call'd Learned and Knowing in comparison of another that is either *Naturally* more ignorant, or more *unimproved*; but ab-

absolutely speaking, the most that any or all of us either know, or can know, here, is of little or no Consideration. What we know of God is but little, for as the Apostle says, *We see through a Glass, darkly*: What we know of our selves perhaps is less, and what we know of the World about us is not much. *We have seen but a few of* Eccles. 43. *God's works*, as the Wise Man observes, and we *understand yet fewer*. There are almost an infinite number of things which we never so much as thought of, and of most things we conceive very darkly and uncertainly, and there is not one thing from the greatest to the least, which we do or can understand thoroughly. Those that apply their whole study to any one thing, can never come to the End of that one thing; for not only every Science, but every particular of it has its unmeasurable depths and recesses; and 'tis confessed by a great Inquirer into the Nature of Animony (as 'tis related by the Honourable Mr. Boyle) that *'tis impossible for one man to understand* Nat. Hist. *thoroughly that one single Mineral only*. And if a P. 13. Man cannot understand *All* of so little, how little must he understand of *All*! Suppose further, that all the Knowledge of the Learned were put together, 'twould weigh but Light; for what one Art or Science is there that is brought to any tolerable Perfection? And if the Common Stock be so little, how small a Pittance is it that must fall to every particular Man's share! And where is that Man, who after all his Poring and Studying, is able to answer all the Questions, I will not say which God put to Job, but which may be askt him by the next Idiot he meets?

Job 38.



'Twere an endless undertaking to represent at large the little that we know, or are capable of knowing. Nor do I design to turn a second *Agrippa*, and entertain your Ladyship with a long Harangue about the *Vanity of Humane Sciences*; only give me leave to touch upon two notorious instances of our Ignorance, and in that very Science which is pretended to be at the very *Vertical Point* of Improvement. 'Tis concerning the *Maximum* and the *Minimum Naturale*, the *Greatest* and the *Least* thing in Nature. As to the first, the Question is, Whether the Extension of the Universe be Finite or Infinite? If you say 'tis Positively Infinite, besides the difficulty of conceiving how any thing can be so extended, 'twill follow, that God himself cannot add the least further Dimension to it. If you say 'tis Finite, suppose your self in the utmost extremities of it, and try whether it be possible for you to dis-imagin further Extension. Then as to the Second, the Question is, whether every, even the least assignable Part of Matter, be infinitely Divisible or no? If you say Yes, then 'twill unavoidably follow, that the least Atom will have as many Parts as the whole World. If you say no, then you must say that Matter may be Divided so long, till at last you come to a Part that does not contain more other Parts; if so, then I enquire, has this *uncontaining* Part Figure, or has it not? If not, then 'tis Infinite, Figure being only the Termination of Quantity. But if it has, then it has more other Parts *above, below* and of *each side*, and consequently may again be divided, contrary to what you supposed. So that  
you

you see here are *Desperate* Difficulties on both sides, say what you will you are equally baffled ; and yet 'tis most certain that one only can be true, they being two opposite parts of a Contradiction, but which is so, is beyond the Capacity of Human Understanding to determin.

## VI.

The like Difficulties we meet with, when we inquire concerning *Time*, whether it be *Infinitely* divisible, or only into *Moments* ? And so again in the Business of *Motion*, whether there be any such thing as the *Extream* Degree of *Swiftness* and *Slowness*, or no ? Neither of which can be defined without manifest Absurdity. But 'tis superfluous, as well as endless, to display the particulars of our Ignorance, tho' indeed when all Attempts are cast up, that will be found to be our *best Knowledge*. This only in General, our Life is so short, our Progress in Learning so slow, and Learning in it self so long and tedious, and what we do or can know so very little, that the *Patrons* of *Scepticism* had much more reason to conclude from the *Disability* of our *Faculties*, and the *slightness* of our *Attainments*, than from the *uncertainty* and *instability* of *Truth*, that there is no Knowledge.

## VII.

*Secondly*, I consider, that as we can here know but Little, so even that very little which we do, serves more to our Trouble and Disquiet, than to our Pleasure and Satisfaction. And here comes in that experimental Reflection of the Wise Man, *Eccles. 1. 18.*  
*In much Wisdom is much Grief, and he that increases Knowledge, increases Sorrow.* This Proposition is not true, *Absolutely* consider'd, Knowledge

Col. 3. 10. being the Perfection of Human Nature, the *Image of God*, and the Principal Ingredient of our future Happiness, but only with relation to the present State and Posture of Man. And in this respect it is abundantly true. First, Because the more we know, the more we shall discover of our Ignorance, ( that being the chiefest thing we learn by our study ) which we shall find to be of an infinitely larger Sphere than our Knowledge, and consequently shall be more troubled for what we do not know, than pleas'd with what we do. Secondly, Because the Prospect of what yet further remains to be known will inflame our Thirst after it. For Wisdom says of her self, *They that Eat of me shall yet be Hungry, and they that Drink of me shall yet be Thirsty.* Which tho it be a great Commendation of Wisdom, and an Argument of her inexhaustible Excellence, yet 'tis withal a great Instrument of Punishment to those who can attain so little of it, as cannot satisfy that Thirst which it has inflamed. Thirdly, Because the more a Man improves his thinking Faculty, the more apt he will be to be disgusted and offended with the follies of Society; as the most delicate Touch is the soonest put to Pain. There being a thousand Impertinences that will strike very disagreeably upon a discerning Mind, which won't so much as affect a grosser Understanding.

## VIII

But the Principal Ground of this Assertion, and which, did not the quickness of your Ladyship's Apprehension oblige me to Brevity, I could be *Voluminous* upon, is this: 'Tis most certain that Man is now placed in the Midst of Vanities and unsatisfying Objects, and that his True

Good

Good is not within his reach, and consequently whatever Pleasure he takes in those things that are purely owing to his *Ignorance* of their *Vanity*. Well, if so, then *Va Sapiienti, Wo be to the Wise Man*. This is not a place to be *Wise* in. There is nothing here Solid enough to endure the *Test* of Wisdom. The *Wise Man* cannot find a *Paradise* here, tho the *Fool* can. The more he knows, the more he discovers the *Vanity* of all Pretended Enjoyments; and the more he does this, the more he streightens and retrenches his Delights; and the more he does this, the more he retires and withdraws himself from all Worldly Diversion, and this sets him the more a Thinking and Musing; and this again presents to his Mind a fresh and more lively Conviction of the Worlds *Vanity*; and this makes him again retrench his Delights, and so on in this returning Circle, till at length he finds nothing but his *bare Wisdom* to delight in. And a little more Thinking makes him see the *Vanity* of *that* too. And now all's gone. To dispatch this part in one word, this is the Fruit of being *Wise*, to be able to taste nothing that's *Present*, nor to flatter ones self with the *Prospect* of what is to *come*, which is a state of horrible Privation and Sterility. This is the *thorough Wise Man's* Lot, and every advance in Wisdom is a step towards this Condition. So true is it, that *he who increases Wisdom, increases Sorrow*, while in the mean time the *Fool* Laughs and is Merry.

## IX.

Thirdly, I consider, that if our Knowledge could yield us more Satisfaction than it occasions Trouble, yet our Life is so short, and so incumber'd,

that we can *make* but *little* of the enjoyment; so little, that 'tis not answerable to the meer Labour we undergo in acquiring it. All the *Morning* of our days is spent in the *Preliminaries* of *Learning*, in Learning Words and Terms of Art, wherein there is nothing but toil and drudgery, and before we can taste any of the *Fruits* of the *Tree of Knowledge*, before we can relish what is *Intellectual* and *Rational* in it, our Sun is got into the *Meridian*, and then it presently begins to *decline*, and our Learning with it; our Light, our Strength, and our Time make haste to consume; nothing increases now but the *Shadows*, that is our Ignorance and Darkness of Mind; and while we consider and look about us, the Sun Sets, and all is concluded in the Darkness and Shadow of Death. But oftentimes the Sun is intercepted by a *Cloud* long before it Sets, and we live backward again, grow weak and childish, silly and forgetful, and unlearn faster than we learnt; or if it chance to shine bright to the last, then we improve *too much*, and grow too wise for our *selves*, and reject the greatest part of what we learnt before, as idle and insignificant. So that we are under a Necessity of unlearning in a short time most of what we have so *dearly* learnt, either thro' forgetfulness, or improvement of Judgment.

## X.

*Fourthly*, I consider, that there is no Necessity of our being so wonderfully Learned and Knowing here. 'Tis neither Necessary, as *injoyn'd* by God, nor as a *Means* to any considerable End. We can be *Good*, and we can be *Happy* without it. And as to the Interest of Communities and Publick Societies, 'tis *Civil Prudence* and *Honesty*, and

and not *Learning*, which makes *them* Happy. *Rome* for the first five hundred years was without any Figure or Character for Learning, and yet it Flourish'd in all that time, and was a Pattern to the rest of the World both of *Vertue* and *Valour*. And lest any advantage in our *after-State* should be alledged for its Necessity, this makes it more unnecessary than any Consideration besides. For tho we are never so unlearned now, provided we know enough to do our Duty, and live well, we shall in a short time arrive to such a Degree of Knowledge as is requisite to our Supreme Perfection, to which our Present Learning cannot add, and from which our Present Ignorance will not Diminish. I do not say this will be immediately upon our discharge from the Body, there being some reasonable Controversie about that, (which would be too great a Digression at present to pursue) tho 'tis most certain that even then there must needs be great enlargements of Understanding: However 'tis most unquestionable that this our *Intellectual Accomplishment* can be no further off than our enjoyment of the *Beatifick Vision*. We shall then commence instantaneously Wise and Learned, and be fully possess'd of the Tree of Knowledge, as well as of the Tree of Life. For then that *Glass* through which we now see Darkly, shall be laid aside, and there shall be no other but the *Speculum Deitatis*, the Glass of the Divinity, which is no other than the *Ideal World*, which shall be now more intimately united to us, and more clearly display'd before us. And tho even now there shall be Degrees of Knowledge, according to the various Participation of the *Ideal Light*; yet the variety of this Dispensation

shall not proceed by the degree of our Knowledge in this Life, but by some other Measure. For,

## XI.

*Fifthly*, I consider, that tho there is no necessity of our being so very *Learned* and *Knowing*, yet there is an Absolute Necessity of our being *Good* and *Virtuous*. This is Necessary both ways, as Commanded by God, and as a Means to our Final Perfection. And besides, 'tis necessary *now*, there being no other opportunity for it. If we don't know here, we may know hereafter, and shall infallibly do so if we are but *Good* here; but if we be not good here, we shall neither be *Good*, *Happy*, nor *Knowing*, hereafter. The *Main* Opportunity for Knowledge is *after* this Life, but the *only* opportunity for being good is *Now*. And if we take care to improve this, we are sufficiently secure of the other, and of whatever else appertains to the Perfection of our Natures. But if this be neglected, all is lost. This therefore is indispensably necessary, and 'tis the only thing that is so; and 'tis necessary *Now*, necessary not only to our *Happiness* in *General*, but also to that of our *Intellectual* Part in *Particular*. For,

## XII.

*Sixthly*, And Lastly, I consider, that thus stands the Case between *God* and *Man*. First, *Man* is supposed to be made in a state of Innocence and Perfection, in perfect Favour and Communion with God, his true Good, and in a Capacity to continue. From this Excellent State he is supposed to *Fall*, and by his Fall so to *disable himself* that he cannot by his own strength *Repent* and Live

live well, and so to *provoke* God, that tho he *could* and *did* Repent, yet he would not be Pardon'd and Accepted, without Satisfaction made to Divine Justice. This Satisfaction Man is supposed not able to make, nor any other Creature for him. Whereupon God in great Mercy and Pity is supposed to ordain a *Mediator*, his own Son, God and Man, between himself and his *Lapsed Creature*, who by the Sacrifice of himself should Effect two things, answerable to the double Necessity of Man, first make Repentance available, which otherwise would not have been so; and secondly Merit Grace for him, that he might be able to Repent. And this is what we are to understand by the *Restoration* or *Redemption* of Man, which therefore is *Universal* and *Incondignate*.

## XIII.

But still notwithstanding all that this *Mediation* hath done for him, Man is supposed only so far restored, as to be put in a Pardonable and Reconcilable State. (for as for our being *actually* and *immediately* reconciled by the Death of Christ, that's a silly, fond, *Antinomian* conceit, and no way consistent with the *Great Mystery* of Godliness) I say Man is yet only in a *Capacity* or Possibility of Pardon and Reconciliation, which is then, and then only reduced to *act*, when he actually performs the *Conditions* of Reconciliation, when he Believes, Repents, and leads a good Life, *with* which he *may*, and *without* which he *shall not* be Pardon'd and Saved, notwithstanding that Christ has Dy'd for him. The Design of whose Death was not to make a good Life *unnecessary*, but only to render it *Efficacious* and Available, not to procure a Privilege of being saved



without it, (as some fancy) but that we might be saved *with it*. If this Qualification be wanting, we shall be so far from being any thing *advantaged* from the Redemption purchas'd by our Mediator, that we shall be *Accountable* for it, to the great aggravation both of our Guilt and Misery. It therefore highly concerns Man to improve with all diligence this short and only opportunity of *making his Great Fortune*, to adorn his Mind with all Moral and Religious Perfections, and his Life with all good Actions, since with this he *may* be happy in all his Capacities, and without it he shall not only fall into a state of unutterable Misery, but be also accountable for the *Possibility* he had of *escaping it*, for neglecting so great Salvation, so great an *Opportunity* of being saved.

## XIX

○ These things being premised concerning the present *Hypothesis*, or state of Man, First, that he can there know but very *little*. Secondly, that even that little Knowledge which he can attain to, serves more to his Trouble than Satisfaction, and so is not only *Vanity*, but also *Vexation* of Spirit. Thirdly, that supposing it as Pleasant as may be, yet such is the shortness and incumbrance of his Life, that the enjoyment of it is not answerable to the Labour of acquiring it. Fourthly, That there is no Necessity of such a deal of Learning and Knowledge, either as to this World, or to the next, and that ere long, he shall have his fill of Knowledge in the Beatifick Vision of the *Ideal World*, one Glance whereof shall instruct him more, than an Eternal poring upon all the Books in this, and *undistinguish* the greatest

greatest *Doubt* from the most ignorant Peasant. Fifthly, That there is an Absolute Necessity of his being *Good* and *Vertuous*, this being the condition not only of his Happiness in general, but also of the accomplishment of his *Understanding* in particular. And that Now is the only opportunity for it. Sixthly and Lastly, That the Attainment of Happiness and Intellectual Perfection upon this Condition was the Purchase of his Saviours Death, who has also Merited *Grace* for his assistance in the Performance of it. Which if he neglect, he shall not only miss of Happiness, but be also answerable for so *Great*, and so *Dear* an opportunity of gaining it. From these Premises 'twill, I think, follow with no less than *Mathematical Evidence*,

**XV.**

First, that *Learning* and *Knowledge* is not the thing for which God design'd Man in this Station, nor consequently the *End* or Reason of his bestowing upon him those Intellectual and Rational Powers which he has. For had this been the End and Design of God, he would have made it more *Possible* for him, and withal more his *Interest* and *Concern* to attain it.

Secondly, 'twill follow that the End for which God intended Man here, and the Reason why he made him a Rational Creature, was that he might live *vertuously* and well; so serve him here, that he might be rewarded with Happiness and *perfect Knowledge* hereafter; having furnish'd him with Intellectual Abilities sufficient for *this*, tho not for the *other*. Thirdly and Lastly, 'twill follow, that the principal care and concern of Man both because of his *own Interest*, and out of com-

compliance with the *Designs* of God, ought to be to Live a good and regular Life, to accomplish the *Moral Part* of his Nature, to subdue his Passions, to rectifie his Love, to study Purity of Heart and Life; in one word, to *perfect Holiness* in the fear of God, and (which is what we have been hitherto enquiring after) that he ought to busie himself in the Study of Learning and Knowledge no further, than as 'tis conducive to the Interest of Religion and *Virtue*.

## XVI.

This therefore is the *Measure* to be observed in our prosecution of Learning and Knowledge. We are to Study only that we may be Good, and consequently ought to prosecute such Knowledge only as has an aptness to make us so, that which the Apostle calls the *Truths*, which is after Godliness. For that's the only Business we have to do in this World. Whatever Knowledge we prosecute besides this, or further than 'tis conducive to this end, tho it be *absolutely* consider'd, never so excellent and perfective of our Rational part, yet with respect to the present posture and Itation of Man, 'tis a Culpable Curiosity, and an unaccountable Vanity, and only a more solemn and laborious way of being *Idle* and *Impertinent*.

## XVII.

And this will be found (if well examin'd) to be nothing different from the Censure of the Wise Preacher, *And I gave my Heart to know Wisdom*, says he, *and I perceiv'd that this also is Vanity and Vexation of Spirit*. Not that he now first applied himself to the study of Wisdom, No, he had been inspired with that before, and by the help of it had discover'd the Vanity of all other

other things. But that Wisdom which saw thro' all other things, did not as yet perceive the Vanity of it self. He therefore now gave his Heart to *know* Wisdom, that is, to reflect upon it, and Consider whether this might be excepted from his general Censure, and struck out of the Scroll of Vanities. And upon deep reflection he found that it could not, and that even *this* also was as much a Vanity as any of the rest. Now this Proposition of *Solomon's* cannot be understood *Absolutely*, ( Knowledge being an undoubted Perfection of Human Nature ) but only with respect to the present posture of Man in this World. Neither can it be understood of *all* kind of Knowledge even in *this* Life, some kind of Knowledge being necessary to qualify him for Happiness in the next. It must therefore Necessarily be understood of *all that* Knowledge which contributes not to that great End. So that from these two Necessary Limitations the Sense of *Solomon's* Proposition ( if it have any ) must be this, that to Man in this present juncture, all Knowledge that does not contribute to the interest of his After-state, is downright *Vanity* and *Vexation* of Spirit.

## XVIII.

For, to what purpose should we Study *so much*, considering that after all we are able to *know so little*? Considering that even that *little* is enough to trouble and disquiet us, considering that our Life is as much too short for the enjoying what Knowledge we *have*, as for compassing what we *would* have; and withal considering that there lies no manner of Obligation or Necessity upon us to do thus. But ( which is what I would most of all inculcate ) to what purpose imaginable should

should we be so busie, and vehement in the pursuit of Learning, of any Learning, but what is of use to the Moral Conduct of our Life, considering these two things, First, that 'tis but to stay a little while and we shall have all that Knowledge *Gratis*, from the Communications of the *Ideal World*, which we so *unsuccessfully* drudge for here, to the neglect of more important and concerning exercises. And Secondly, considering that there is such an absolute necessity of being *Good*, and of *Living well*, and that this short uncertain Life is the only time for it, which if neglected, this great work must lie undone for ever. Upon the *former* consideration, this *Studious Bookish* Humour, is like laying out a great Sum of Money to purchase an Estate, which after one *Weak dropping* Life will of Course fall into hand. And I am sure he would be reckon'd *Fool* or *Mad*, that should do so. And upon the *latter*, 'tis as if a Man that was Riding Post upon Business of *Life* and *Death*, should as he passes through a *Wood*, stand still to listen to the Singing of a *Nightingale*, and so forget the main and only business of his Journey.

## XIX.

'Tis most certain that the two Cases here supposed, are as great instances of Folly and Impertinence as can well be conceiv'd, and yet (how ever it comes to pass that we are not sensible of it) 'tis certain, that they are very applicable to the Intellectual Conduct of Human Life as 'tis generally managed. And tho we are all ready enough to call such Men Fools as shall do as in the two mentioned instances is supposed, yet 'tis most certain that we do the very same or worse, that

that we are too much concern'd in the *Application* of the *Parable*, and that of most of us it may be truly said, *Thou art the Man.*

## XX.

For I demand, what difference is there between him that now labours and toils for Learning and Knowledge, which in a little time he shall be *easily* and *fully* possess of, and him that dearly buys an Estate which would otherwise come to him after a short Interval? VVhat difference is there, but only this? That he that buys the Estate, tho he might have *spared* his Mony, yet however he *gets* what he laid out his Mony for; his expence indeed was *needless*, but not in *vain*. VVhereas he that drudges in the pursuit of Knowledge, not only *toils* for that which in a short time he shall have with *ease*, and in *abundance*, but which after all he *can't compass* in any considerable measure, and so undergoes a *vain* as well as *unnecessary* Labour; and is therefore the *greater Fool*.

## XXI.

Again I demand, VVhat difference is there between him who when he is employ'd upon business of Life and Death shall alight from his Horse, and stand Idling to hear a *Nightingale* Singing in the VVood, and him who having an Eternity of Happiness to secure by the right ordering of his Life and Manners, and having only this *Point* of time to do it in, shall yet turn *Vertuoso*, and set up for Learning and *Curiosity*. 'Tis true indeed, the *Nightingale* Sings well, and 'twere worth while to stand still and hear him, were I disingaged from more concerning Affairs; but not certainly when I am upon Life and Death.

And

And so Learning and Knowledge are excellent things, and such as would deserve my Study, and my Time, had I any to *spare*, and were more at leisure; but not certainly when I have so great an Interest as that of my Final State depending upon the good use of it. My Business *now* is not to be *Learned*, but to be *Good*.

## XXII.

For is my Life so long, am I so *over-stock'd* with Time, or is my depending Interest so little, or is it so easily secured, that I can find leisure for *unnecessary Curiosities*? Is this Conduct agreeable to the present station and posture of Man, whose entrance into this VWorld, and whose whole stay in it, is purely in order to another state? Or would any one imagin this to be the Condition of Man by such a Conduct! Shall a Prisoner who has but a few days allow'd him to make a Preparation for his Trial, spend that little opportunity in *Cutting and Carving*, and such like *Mechanical Contrivances*? Or would any one imagin such a Man to be in such a Condition, near a doubtful Trial of Life and Death, whom coming into a Prison he finds so employ'd? And yet is there any thing more Absurd and Impertinent in this, than in the present Supposition, to have a Man, who has so great a Concern upon his Hands as the Preparing for Eternity, all busie and taken up with *Quadrants*, and *Telescopes*, *Furnaces*, *Syphons*, and *Air-Pumps*?

## XXIII.

When we would expose any Signal Impertinence, we commonly illustrate it by the Example of *Archimedes*, who was busie in making Mathematical Figures on the Sands of *Syracuse*, while the

the City was taken by *Marcellus*, and so, though there were Particular Orders given for his Safety, lost his Life by his *unseasonable Study*. Now I confess there was impertinence and absurdity enough in this instance to consign it over to Posterity. But had *Archimedes* been a *Christian*, or otherwise assured of the Great Concerns of another World, I should have said, that the Main of his Impertinence did not lie *here*, in being Mathematically employ'd when the Enemy was taking the City, but in laying out his Thoughts and Time upon such an insignificant unconcerning Study, while he had no less a concern upon him, than the securing his Eternal Interest: Which must be done now or never. Nothing certainly is an *Impertinence*, if this be not, to hunt after Learning and Knowledge in such a *junction* as this.

## XXIV.

Sure I am, and your *Ladyship* too very well knows, that many other Proceedings in the Conduct of Life are condemn'd of Vanity and Impertinence upon the very same Grounds, tho not half so inconsistent with the Character of Man, nor so disagreeable to his present Posture in this World. For is not the World full of Invectives? And have not the Pens of *Moral Writers* been all along employ'd against those that apply themselves to Secular Acquirements, spend their short and uncertain Lives, which ought to be employ'd in the Pursuit of an infinitely higher Interest, in gaping up and down after Honours and Preferments, in long and frequent attendances at Court, in raising Families, getting Estates, and the like? These things I say, and such like, are condemn'd and censur'd, not only upon the stock of their

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*particular* Viciousness, as Crimes of *Ambition* or *Covetousness* respectively, but for what they have in *Common*, as they are mispendings of Time, and unconcerning *Excentrical* employments.

## XXV.

But now I would fain know, whether any of these *Misconducts* of Life be more expensive of our Time, more remote and alien from the main business of it, more *unrelating* to our Grand Concern, and consequently more *Impertinent*, than to be busily employ'd in the Niceties and Curiousities of Learning: And whether a Man that litters away *Six Weeks* in *Court-Attendances* for a place of Honour, be not every whit as *accountably* employ'd with respect to the *End* of Man in the other VWorld, and his *Business* in *this*, as he that shall spend so much time in the Solution of a *Mathematical Question*, as *M. Descartes* I remember confesses of himself in one of his *Epistles*. And why then the Prosecution of Learning should be the *only* thing *excepted* from the Vanities and Impertinences of Life, I have not Head enough to understand.

## XXVI.

And yet so it is. All other *Excentrical* unconcerning Occupations are cried down meerly for being so, as not according with the present Character and State of Man. This alone is not contented with the reputation of *Innocence*, but stands for *positive merit* and *excellence*, for Praise and Commendation. To say a Man is a Lover of Knowledge, and a diligent Inquirer after Truth, is almost as great an *Encomium* as you can give him, and the time spent in the *Study*, tho' in the search of *unedifying* Truth, is reckon'd almost

most as *laudably* bestow'd as that in the *Chapel* ; and ( so inconsistent with it self is Human Judgment ) 'tis Learning only that is *allow'd* not only to *divide*, but to *devour* the greatest part of our short Life, and is the only thing that with *Credit* and *Publick allowance* stands in Competition with *Religion* and the study of *Vertue*. Nay, by the most is preferr'd before it, who would rather be counted *Learned* than *Pious*.

## XXVII.

But is not this a strange and unreasonable Competition ? It must indeed be confess'd, that the Perfection of Man is *double*, of the Intellectual as well as of the Moral Part, and that Knowledge is a very *Divine* Excellence. But certainly *Rectitude of Will* is a greater Ornament and Perfection than *Brightness of Understanding*, and to be *Good* is more *Divine* than to be *Wise* and *Knowing*, that being the *Principal*, perhaps only difference between an *Angel* and a *Devil*. And tho *Solomon's* Choice be universally applauded, yet I think that of *Mary* is to be preferr'd before it, and ( to use the Expression of the Excellent *Monsieur Poirer* ) Cogitat. Ration. de Deo, p. 512. that 'tis better like an *Infant without much reasoning* to love much, than like the *Devil to Reason much without Love*.

## XXVIII.

But suppose *Knowledge* were a much *Diviner* Excellence than 'tis, suppose it were more perfective of, and Ornamental to Human Nature, than the *Habit* and *Practice* of *Vertue* ; yet still this Competition would be utterly against Reason. For 'tis to be consider'd ( as I have already suggested ) that the Former we can't have now in any *Measure*, and shall have it hereafter *without*

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*Measure* ;

*Measure* ; but the latter we may have now ( for we may *Love* much tho we can't *know* much ) and cannot have it hereafter. Now the Question is, whether we ought to be more *Sollicitous* for that *Intellectual Perfection* which we can't have here, and shall have hereafter ; or for that *Moral Perfection* which we may have here, and cannot hereafter ? And I think we need not consult an Oracle, or conjure up a Spirit to be resolv'd of this Question.

## XXIX.

And this one *Solitary* Consideration ( much more in Conjunction with the other parts of the *Human Character* ) I take to be sufficient to justify the Truth of what *measure* we have prescribed to our Intellectual Conduct, that we ought to prosecute Learning and Knowledge no further than as 'tis conducive to the great Ends of Piety and Vertue. And consequently that whenever we stady to any other Purpose, or in any other Degree than this, we are unaccountably impertinently, I may add *Sinfully* employ'd. For this is the whole of Man, to fear God and keep his Commandments; the whole of Man in this Station, and consequently this ought to be the only *Scope* of all his *Studies* and *Endeavours*.

Ecclef. 12.  
13.

## XXX.

And accordingly 'tis observable that the Scripture, whenever it makes mention of *Wisdom* with any mark of *Commendation*, It always means by it either the very Practice of Religion and Vertue, or *such* Knowledge at least, that has a near and strong influence upon it ; thereby implying that that is the only *Wisdom* which becomes the Study of Man. Remarkable above the rest to this purpose

purpose is the 28th Chapter of *Job*, where having run thro several Instances of *Natural Knowledge*, at length, says he, *But where shall Wisdom be found? And where is the place of Understanding?* V. 12.  
 As much as to say, that in none of the other things mention'd did consist the Wisdom of *Man*. Then it follows, *Man knoweth not the price thereof, neither is it found in the Land of the Living: The Depth saith, it is not in me, and the Sea saith it is not in me.* V. 13.  
 Not in the Depths of Learning, nor in the Recesses of Speculation, seeing it is hid from the Eyes of all *Living*, and kept close from the Fowls of the Air, from Men of high and Towing Notions, and sublime Theories. *Destruction and Death* V. 14.  
*say, we have heard the Fame thereof with our Ears.* V. 22.  
 As much as to say, that after this Life, and then only, unless perhaps about the Hour of Death, Men begin to have a true Sense, and lively savoury Relish of this Wisdom. But in the mean time, *God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof.* V. 23.  
*And unto Man he said, behold the Fear of the Lord, that is Wisdom, and to depart from Evil, that is Understanding.* V. 28.  
 To *Man* he said; Had it been to another Creature, suppose an Angel, in a state of Security and Confirmation, he would perhaps have recommended for Wisdom the Study of Nature, and the Curiosities of Philosophy, but having to do with *Man*, a probationary and unfixed Creature, that shall be either Happy or Miserable, according as he demeans himself in this short time of Trial, the only Wisdom he advises to such a Creature in such a Station, is to look well to his *Moral Conduct*, to study Religion and good Life.

And now (*Madam*) since we are upon *Scripture Authority* (for indeed so little has this matter been consider'd, that I have scarce any other to follow) will your *Ladyship* give me leave in further Confirmation of the *Measure* propos'd to commend to your Consideration two great *Scripture-Examples*, both of Men Eminently *Wise*, and of a Learned Education. The Men I instance in are *Moses* and *St. Paul*. The latter of which *1 Cor. 2.* professedly declares, that he determin'd to know nothing, but *Jesus Christ*, and him *Crucify'd*, that is, nothing but what concerns either the Faith or the Practice of Christianity. And the former complaining of the gross Ignorance of the People committed to his Charge, and desiring they would become wiser, breaks out into this *Passionate Wish*, *O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter End.* *Deut. 32. 29.*

## XXXII.

*Moses* had been bred a *Scholar*, as well as a *Courtier*, and was well instructed in all the Secrets of the *Egyptian Philosophy*, which was then the best in the *World*. Besides, he was himself a wise Man, a Man, that besides the Advantages of *Pharaoh's Court*, had the Divine Light himself for his Tutor, and convers'd personally with his Maker, and therefore must needs be supposed to know what was true *Wisdom*. But now this he does not make to consist either in the Accomplishments of *Courtly Education*, or in the deep Mysteries of *Philosophy*, but in the consideration of our latter End. He wishes that his People were *Wise*, and to this End he does not wish that they were as *Well-bred* as he, or as *Learned* as he, but only that

that they understood this, this one thing, that they would consider their latter End. VVhich he makes the Summary and Abstract of all VVifdom. Much like that of *Plato*, when he defines Philosophy to be *The Theory of Death*.

## XXXIII.

And here, if your *Ladyship* will dispense with a short Digression, a Digression from the *immediate* Tied of my Discourse, tho not from the *General* Design of it, I would upon this occasion briefly represent to you what an excellent part of Wisdom it is for Man seriously to consider his latter End. To make this distinctly appear, I shall proceed upon these two grounds : First, That the Consideration of Death is the most proper Exercise that a wise Man can be employ'd about. And Secondly, that this is the most compendious way of making him wise that is not so.

## XXXIV.

And First, it is the most proper exercise that a wise Man can employ himself about. For Wisdom consists in a due estimation of things ; and then things are duly estimated, when they are measured and rated, first as they are *absolutely* in themselves ; and secondly, as they stand in *Relation* to us. If they are great and extraordinary, then they deserve to be consider'd for *their own* sakes ; and if they nearly relate to us, then they deserve to be consider'd for *ours*. And upon both these accounts, Death and its Consequences are highly deserving a Wise Man's Thoughts and Reflections.

## XXXV.

For first, they are great and extraordinary Transactions, barely as in themselves consider'd, and as such would deservedly engage the most

attentive consideration, even of a *lander-by*, or any other *indifferent* Being, suppose an *Angel*, that can be no otherwise concerned in it, than as it is a *great Event*, a *Noble Scene* of Providence, a matter of *Wonder* and *Curiosity*. I say, upon this single Account, Death with its Consequences is as fit a Subject for the Contemplation of a *Wise Man* as any in Nature. XXXVI.

Or if there be within the Sphere of *Nature* things of a greater and more *Bulky* appearance, yet certainly there is nothing wherein Man is so nearly concern'd, so highly interess'd as in Death. Since upon the manner of this depends his *Eternal Happiness* or *Ruin*. There is therefore nothing that so much deserves to be consider'd by him. Whether therefore we regard the Absolute greatness of the thing, or its Relative greatness with respect to us, as we are interess'd and concerned in it, but especially if we weigh *both*, the consideration of Death is as proper an Exercise as a *Wise Man* can be employ'd about. XXXVII.

And as 'tis so fit an employment for him that is *VVise* already, so secondly, is it the most compendious way of making him wise, truly wise, that is not so. For all *VVisdom* is in Order to *Happiness*, and to be truly wise, is to be *Wise unto Salvation*. *VV*hatever Knowledge contributes not to this, is quite beside the Mark, and is, as the Apostle calls it, *Science falsely so called*. The Knowledge it self is *vain*, and the Study of it is *impertinent*. XXXVIII.

Now the only way to *Happiness* is a good Life, and consequently all *Wisdom* being in Order to *Hap-*

Happiness, that's the only Wisdom that serves to the promoting of good Life, according to that of Job before cited, *And to man he said, behold the fear of the Lord that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.* That therefore is the most compendious way of making a Man wise, that soonest makes him good, and reduces his Mind to a moral Regularity. And nothing does this so soon and so well as the serious and habitual consideration of Death. And therefore, says the wise man, *Remember Death and Corruption, and keep the Commandments.* The shortest Compendium of holy living that ever was given. As if he had said, Many are the Precepts and Admonitions left us by wise and good Men, for the moral Conduct of Life ; but would you have a short and infallible Directory of living well ? why, remember *Death and Corruption* ; Do but remember this, and forget all other Rules if you will, and your Duty if you can.

## XXXIX.

And what is here remarked by one wise Man is consented to by all. Hence those common Practices among the Ancients, of placing Sepulchres in their Gardens, and of using that celebrated Motto, *Memento mori*. Hence also that Modern as well as Ancient Custom of putting Emblems of Mortality in Churches, and other Publick places, by all which 'tis implied, that the Consideration of Death is the greatest security of a good Life. As indeed it must be upon this general ground, because it does that at a Blow, which other Considerations do by Parts, and gives an entire defeat to the three great Enemies of our Salvation at once. It sets us above the Temptations of the



*World, the Flesh, and the Devil.* For how can the World captivate him, who considers he is but a stranger in it, and that he must shortly leave it! How can the Flesh insnare him, who has his Sepulchre always in his Eye, and reflects upon the cold Lodging he shall have there! And how can the Devil prevail upon him, who remembers always he must die, and then enter upon an unchangeable State of Happiness or Misery, according as he has either *resisted* or *yielded* to his Temptations! Of so vast consequence is the constant Thinking upon Death above all other things that fall within the compass even of *useful* and *Practical* Meditation, and so great Reason had *Moses* for placing the Wisdom of Man in the Consideration of his latter End.

## XL.

But to return ( if being still in pursuit of my General Design, I may well be said to be out of the way ) I now persuade my self that from the Character I have drawn of Man and his present Circumstances, together with those Reflections built upon it, and interwoven with it; and lastly, from *Divine Authority*, the Measure we have given, is so well Establish'd, that if your *Ladyship* be not yet, you ought to be convinc'd, that however Naturally desirous we may be of Knowledge, yet that *this Appetite* is to be govern'd as well as those that are *Sensual*; that we ought to indulge it only so far as may tend to the Moralizing our Souls, and the conducting our Lives, and the fitting us for that Happiness which God has promised not to the *Learned*, but to the *Good*. And that if it be gratify'd to any other purpose, or in any other *Measure* than this, our

Curiosity

Curiosity is impertinent, our study immoderate  
and the *Tree of Knowledge* still a forbidden Plant.

## XLI.

And now ( *Madam* ) having fix'd and stated  
the Measure of our present Affection to, and In-  
quiry after Learning and Knowledge, which I  
think is establish'd upon irrefutable Principles, I  
may leave it to your *Ladyship* to consider how  
much 'tis observ'd in the general Conduct of our  
Studies. 'Tis plain that 'tis not observ'd at all.  
For these two things are too Notorious to need  
any more for their Proof, than only to look abroad  
into the World. First, that very little of that  
which is generally made the Subject of Study,  
has any manner of Tendency to Living well here,  
or Happily hereafter. And Secondly, that these ve-  
ry Studies which have no Religious or Moral in-  
fluence upon Life, do yet devour the greatest part  
of it. The *Best* and *Most* of our Time is devoted  
to *Dry Learning*, this we make the *Course* of our  
Study, the rest is only by the *by*, and 'tis well if  
what is Devotional, Practical, or Divinely-relish-  
ing, can find us at leisure upon a Broken piece of  
a *Sunday* or *Holiday*. But the main *Current* of our  
Life runs in Studies of another Nature, that don't  
so much as glance one *kind* Aspect upon good Liv-  
ing, 'tis well if some of them don't hinder it. I  
am sure St. *Austin* thought so, and makes it part  
of his *Penitentials*. Confess. lib.  
I. c. 16.

## XLII.

And because the *Authority* of so Great and so  
Good a Man may convince some, whom the clea-  
rest *Discourse* would leave unperswaded, it may  
be of some Use and Consequence to let the Rea-  
der see how he expresses himself upon this Occa-  
sion.

sion. Speaking of the Institution and Discipline  
 of his Youth, says he, *I learnt in those things ma-  
 ny useful Words, but the same might also be learn in  
 matters that are not vain, and that indeed is the safe  
 way wherein Children ought to be train'd up. But W  
 unto thee thou Torrent of Human Custom! Who is  
 able to resist thee? How long will it be before thou wilt  
 be dried up? How long wilt thou roll along the Sons of  
 Eve into a great and formidable Sea, which they can  
 hardly pass over? Have not I read in thee Jupiter both  
 Thundering and Fornicating at the same time? &c.  
 And yet O thou Hellish Torrent, the Sons of Men are  
 still tossed in thee, and are invited by Rewards to learn  
 these things. Your Pretence indeed is, That this is  
 the way to learn Words, and to get Eloquence, and the  
 Art of Perswasion. As if we should not know these  
 Words, Golden Shower, Lap, Cheat, the Temple of  
 Heaven, &c. unless Terence had brought in a lewd  
 young Man proposing Jupiter to himself as a President  
 for Whoring, while he beheld in a Wall a Piece repre-  
 senting how Jupiter convey'd himself into the Lap of  
 Danae in a golden Shower, and so cheated the poor  
 Woman. But see how the young Man encourages him-  
 self to Lust by this Heavenly President: What God  
 is this, says he? Even he that shakes with Thunder  
 the Temple of Heaven; and shall I then a poor Mor-  
 tal stick to do the same? Now this Immorality does  
 not at all advantage the learning of the Words, but  
 the Words do greatly encourage the committing of the  
 Immorality. Not that I find such fault with the  
 Words themselves, they are pure and choice Vessels, but  
 with that Wine of Error which in them is handed and  
 commended to us by our sottish Teachers: And yet un-  
 less we drank of it we were beaten, nor had we any so-  
 ber Judge to appeal to. And yet I, O my God, in  
 whose*

whose Presence I now securely make this Recollection, willingly learnt these things, and like a Wretch was delighted with my Exercise, and for this I had the Name of a Good, Towardly, Hopeful Boy.

By this you may see what the Judgment of this Holy and Venerable Person was in his private Retirements, and at the most serious Intervals of his Life, concerning the general Course of those Studies, which draw out the *First Runnings* of our Age, and which are of so great Credit and Authority in the World, as to go under the Name of *Ingenious and Liberal Education*. You see he not only condemns and disparages them, but reckons them among those Sins and Irregularities of his Youth, whereof he thought himself obliged to make a particular Confession in this his *Great Penitential*.

#### XLIII.

And here let me not be thought Immodest, if upon great Consideration and full Conviction, I presume to tax the Management of our Publick Schools in the Institution of Youth. Many Miscarriages I might note, but I shall concern my self only with such, as from the Principles laid down, I am led to condemn : Which I comprehend under these two General Heads of Complaint.

I. That they take up so much Time in their Education.

II. That they teach them such frivolous and unprofitable things as they do.

In relation to the first, I can't with any Patience reflect, that out of such a short Compass of time, as that of Human Life, consisting it may be of 50 or 60 Years, (for where one lives longer Hundreds come short) 19 or 20 shall be spent between

tween the *Dictionary* and the *Lexicon*, in hammering out a little Latin and Greek, and in learning a Company of Poetical Fictions and Phantastick Stories. If these things were never so fit and necessary to be known, yet 'tis Barbarous and inhuman to make People spend so much of their little stock of Time upon them. This is to make a *Cure* of Human Ignorance, and to deal with the Infirmities of the *Mind*, as some ill Surgeons do by the Wounds of the *Body*: And, it may be, for the same Reason. If one were to judge of the Life of Man by that Proportion of it that is spent at School, one would think the *Antediluvian* Mark were not yet out, and that we had a Prospect of at least 900 or a 1000 years before us. The Truth is, 'tis an intolerable Abuse that it should be so; and I wonder that the Wisdom and Authority of this improv'd Age of the World will let it be so; especially considering what late Examples we have had of more compendious Methods beyond the Seas. It does not become me, nor am I so fond of the Office of an *Underschooler*, as to project a Scheme of School-Discipline; I leave this to more contriving Heads. Only in the mean time I may venture to say, that the common way is a very great *Tax* upon Human Life: For certainly the short Life of Man can very ill spare so large a Portion of it to be lavish'd away upon the first Elements of Learning; and I believe, when all things are computed, this will be found to be the most *chargeable* part of Education.

But my greatest Quarrel against the Wisdom of these Seminaries, is the frivolousness of the things they teach. I blame them not only for taking too great a Compass for the Instruction

of

of Youth in the things they teach them, but for teaching them such things at all. Men may make Money of *Leather* if they will, by giving it a *Current Stamp*: But setting aside Opinion and Fancy, what real Improvement or Perfection is it to the Mind of a Rational Creature, to be overlaid with Words and Phrases, and to be full charged with Poetical Stories, Dreams and Fancies? How many excellent and useful things might be learnt in the *Mathematicks*, and other ingenious and profitable Sciences, while Boys are *Thumming* and *Murbering Hesiod* and *Homer*, which then they do not understand, and which when they do, they will throw by and despise: And that justly too? For of what signification is such *Stuff* as this, if the Humour of the World had not *turn'd* it up for Learning, to the real Accomplishment of a Reasonable Soul? What Improvement or Perfection can it be to my Understanding to know the Amours of *Pyramus* and *Thysbe*, or the Adventures of *Hero* and *Leander*? Do Men retain any value for these things when they grow up and know better, or endeavour to preserve the Memory of them? Do they not rather studiously forget them, and cast them aside? And is it not reckon'd an ungenteel piece of *Pedantry* to make use of them either in Writing or Conversation? And why then must Poor Boys be condemned with so much Pains and Drudgery to learn such things, which when they are Men they must and will unlearn again? I ask again, and 'tis a very pertinent Question, why must Boys be forc'd with so great expence of Time and Labour, to learn such things as are of no standing constant use? So far from that, that they are dangerous and hurtful, as  
well

well as unprofitable. For I appeal to the common Sense and Experience of Mankind, whether it be advisable to entertain the gay *Catching Fancies* of Boys with the Amorous Scenes of the Poets. Whether it be convenient or safe to season their green Imaginations with such impure and obscene Images as are there set forth to the Life: Or is not this rather the direct way to corrupt them, to sow in their tender Minds the Seeds of Impurity, and to lay a standing Foundation for Debauchery? Let any Man but consider Human Nature as it comes down to us from *Adam*, and tell me, whether he thinks that a Boy is fit to be trusted with *Ovid de Arte Amandi*. For my part I should as soon and sooner trust him with a Conjuring Book. For I think he were better raise the Devil *without* him, than raise a Devil *within* him. I do not condemn this sort of Learning out of Ignorance; for I my self had my Education in a very eminent School, that of *Winchester*, where I made no small Proficiency in *Classick* Learning, as 'tis call'd; and I have since plied it very hard, and run through all the Criticisms of it. But upon a serious Review I take no Satisfaction either in those Studies, or in those Acquirements: Nay, I am so far from that, that I heartily wish that sort of Vain Learning (after all my pains in it) were quite out of Credit, and that the Books that contain it had the same Fate in *our Commonwealth*, that the *Authors* of them had in *Plato's*. For I do not understand upon what Principle, either of Prudence or Piety, such Books as these should be read by *any*, but especially by *Boys*; nor why such Pains should be taken, and so much Diligence used to make them understand 'em. I

think

think they were better continue Ignorant, than to accomplish their Understandings with the hazard of their Morals, upon which such Studies as these can derive no very wholsom Influence. And yet to these our Youth is dedicated, and in these some of us employ our riper Years; nor do we see the Vanity and Impertinence of it in old Age. And then when we die, this very thing makes one great part of our *Funeral Elegy*, that we were so diligent and indefatigable in our Studies, and so inquisitive in the search of Knowledge, perhaps that we procured an *early interment* by it, when, according to the Principles before laid down, we were as impertinently employ'd all the while, as if we had been so long picking Straws in *Bedlam*. I say as *impertinently*, tho perhaps not so *innocently*. The Sum of all comes to this: The measure of prosecuting Learning and Knowledge is their usefulness to good Life. Consequently all Prosecution of it beyond or beside this End, is impertinent and immoderate. This has been fully proved by evident Principles. But now of this sort is the general Prosecution of Learning and Knowledge, as is plain by appealing to the general Conduct of Study. The Conclusion therefore unavoidably follows, That the Intellectual Conduct of Human Life is justly chargeable with an immoderate and impertinent pursuit of Knowledge. Which was the Proposition to be made out, and I am *sorry* to see it so *well* proved.

*The End of the Third Reflection.*

The



*The Conclusion.*

AND now ( Madam ) having finish'd my *Threefold Reflection* upon the Intellectual Conduct of Human Life, I have a double Application to make, one to your *Ladyship*, and another to *my self*. That to your *Ladyship* is this, that you would consider to what a narrow compass, by vertue of the preceding Discourses, these three things are reduced, which before use to take up so large a room, *viz. Learning it self, the Method of Learning, and the Desire and Prosecution of Learning*. The first of which is comprized within the Limits of *Necessary Truth*; the second within those of *Thinking, Purity and Prayer*; the third within its *usefulness* to the *furtherance* of good Life. These indeed are great *retrenchments*, but I think such as are just and necessary to the Regulation of our Intellectual Conduct, which I am glad to find so compendious and disincumber'd, that being a Mark of no small Probability to confirm me in the Truth of it, as the *Rightest Line* is always the *Shortest*.

And since both *Learning it self*, its *Method*, and limits of *Prosecution* are all so reduced, I would further commend to your *Ladyships* Consideration, whether from this great *Abridgment* you can forbear deducing these two *Corollaries*: First, That this *Bookish Humour*, which every where so prevails, is one of the *Spiritual Diseases*, or *Moral Diseases* of Mankind, one of the most *Malignant* Reliques of Original Depravation; it carrying in it the very *Stamp* and *Signature* of Adam's Transgression, which owed its Birth

Birth to Curiosity, and inordinate desire of Knowledge. Secondly, that those who *have Eyes* may in great measure *spare* them, and that those who *have not*, should not, upon the account of Learning, much *lament* the want of them, which is therefore addressed to the Private Consideration of all those that labour under that sad Misfortune.

Now as to my own particular Concern, the result of what I have written is this: I am so inwardly and thoroughly convinc'd of the certainty of those Principles I have here laid down, that I think I am not only under a particular *Obligation*, but almost under a *Necessity* of conducting my Studies according to the Measures proposed. The last of which has left such a strong influence, such a deep impresson upon me, that I think I shall now follow the Advice of the Heathen (*M. Antoninus* as I remember) *ἢ ὡς Βίβλον σκευήσῃ, ῥίη με αὐτὴν τῆς Τίστης ἀφ' ὧν Βιβλίων, καὶ μὴ ἄλλου* rid my self of the Thirst after Books, and study nothing but what serves to the advancement of Piety and Good Life.

I have now spent about Thirteen years in the most celebrated University in the World, and, according to the ordinary Measures, perhaps not amiss, having accomplish'd my self in a competent degree, both with such Learning as the *Academical Standard* requires, and with whatever else my own *Private Genius* inclined me to. But truly I cannot say that I have order'd my Studies in this *Theatre of Learning*, so much to my own Satisfaction, as to my Reputation with others. To be free with you, I must declare, that when I reflect upon my past *Intellectual Conduct*, I am as little satisfied with it as I am with that of my *Morals*,

and that I think I have nigh as much to answer for the *Former*, as I have for the *Latter*, being very Conscious, that the greatest part of it has been employ'd in *Unconcerning Curiosities*, such as derive no moral influence upon the Soul that contemplates them.

But I have now ( if I sufficiently understand myself ) a very different Taste and Apprehension of things, and intend to spend my *uncertain remainder* of time in studying only such things as make for the Moral improvement of my Mind, and the Regulation of my Life, not being able to give an account upon any rational and consistent Principles, why I should study any thing else.

More particularly I think I shall chiefly apply myself to the Reading of such Books as are rather *Perswasive* than *Instructive*, such as are *Sapient*, *Pathetick* and *Divinely-relishing*, such as will kindle and enlarge the *Innersight*, and awaken the *Divine Sense* of the Soul, as considering with myself that I have now, after so much Reading and Speculation, more need of *Heat* than of *Light*. Tho if I were for more Light still, I think this would prove the best *Method* of *Illumination*, and that when all's done, the *Love* of God is the best *Light* of the Soul. For I consider with the excellent Cardinal Bona, That a Man may have Knowledge without Love. But he that Loves, although he wants Sciences humanly acquired, yet he will know more than Human Wisdom can teach him, because he has that Master within him who teaches Man Knowledge. Purity of Heart and Life being one of the Methods of Consulting the *Ideal World*, as was shewn in the Second Part,

And now (*Madam*) I cannot well presage how your *Ladyship* will relish this *Renunciation* of all Studies. *Meerly Curious*, from one whom you apprehended ( perhaps upon too just grounds ) to have been so naturally disposed to them, and so deeply engaged in them. Perhaps you'll say I am already *Countryfy'd* since I left the *University*. How far that *Metamorphosis* may seize upon me, I can't yet tell ; if Solitude and Retirement be enough to bring it, I am, I confess, in great Danger, being now got into a little *Corner* of the World, where I must be more Company to my self than I have been ever yet. But the best on't is, I have not been so great a Stranger to my own Company *all along*, as to fear any great alteration by it now. Nor do I think the Management of the Present Undertaking a *sign* of any such change.

Whether I should have had the same Thoughts in the *University* or no, I can't say ; I rather believe they are owing to my *Country-Retirement* ( as I hinted in the Beginning ) but however that be, sure I am they were entertain'd upon the deepest and severest Consideration ; and I believe are so well grounded, that the more your *Ladyship* considers, the more you will be convinc'd both of the Truth of what I have *Discours'd*, and of the Reasonableness of what I *design* ; which is to devote my self wholly to the accomplishment of my *Moral* part, and of my Intellectual, only so far as is Subservient to the other.

And now (*Madam*) having bid farewell to all unconcerning Studies, all the dry and unsavoury parts of Learning, 'tis high time to take my Leave of your *Ladyship* too ; which I do with this Hope, that you are by this time in some mea-

sure *Convinc'd*, as well as *Entertain'd*, by what has been suggested to your Consideration in the foregoing Discourses. And with this Assurance, that if these Discourses be too *Weak* to bring you over to my present Opinion, they will however prove *strong* enough to work you into a *Heaven*, which is to *believe*, that I still continue in all Fidelity,

Your Ladyships

Most Faithful Friend

and Servant,

Newton St. Lee,

Sept. 2, 1689.

John Norris

## POSTSCRIPT.

**B**Eing inform'd that the Quakers took hold of the former Edition of this Book, giving out that it made for their way, I think it convenient in a few Words to undeceive them, that they should reckon upon more Profelytes than they have. I suppose, if the Quakers understood their own Notion, and knew how to explain it, and into what Principles to resolve it, it would not very much differ from mine. But as they usually represent it, the difference I conceive to be very great; and he that thinks I symbolize with the Quakers in my Notion of the Divine Light, understands neither Me nor Them, as

may

may appear by these following Instances of Difference.

I. The Quakers usually talk of this Light within, as of some Divine *Communication* or *Manifestation* only, whereas I make it to be the very *Essence* and *Substance* of the Deity, which I suppose Virtually to contain all things in it, and to be intimately united to our Minds.

II. The Quakers represent this Light within, as a sort of *Extraordinary Inspiration* ( whence they have the Name of *Emhusiasts* ) whereas I suppose it to be a Man's *Natural* and *Ordinary* way of Understanding.

III. The Quakers ( if I mistake not ) confine their Light within, to some certain Objects, namely Moral and Spiritual Truths, in order only to the Direction of Practice, and accordingly make it a Supplement to *Scripture*, which they say is not *sufficient* without it, nor indeed any more than a meer *Dead Letter* : But now I do not appropriate this Divine Light to Moral or Spiritual things, but extend it as far as all Truth ; yea, as far as all that is Intelligible, which I suppose to be perceiv'd and understood in this Divine Light, as I have explain'd it.

IV. The Quakers make their Light within, a special Priviledge of a certain Order of Men, their own Party. Not indeed as to the *Possibility*, because they suppose all Men to be indifferently capable of this Divine Illumination, as may appear from their contending against Predestination, and for universal Grace. But tho they do not make it a special Priviledge as to the *Possibility*, yet they do as to the *Act*, making none but those of their own Way to be actually

enlightned by it. Whereas according to my Principles this is no special Priviledge, but the common and universal Benefit of all Men ; yea, of all the Intelligent Creation, who all see and understand in this Light of God, without which there would be neither *Truth* nor *Understanding*.

V. The Quakers by their Light within, understand some determinat, *Form'd* Dictate or Proposition, expresly and positively directing and instructing them to do so or so : Whereas my Light is only the *Essential* Truth of God, which indeed is always present to my Understanding, as being intimately united with it, but does not formally inlighten or instruct me, but when I carefully Attend to it and Consult it, and read what is written in those Divine Ideal Characters.

VI. And Lastly, The Quakers do not offer any rational or intelligible Account of their Light within, neither as to the thing, nor as to the Mode of it, but only *Cant* in some loose general Expressions about the *Light*, which they confirm with the Authority of St. *John's* Gospel, though they understand neither one nor t'other. Whereas I have offer'd a Natural, Distinct and Philosophical way of explaining both, namely by the Omniformity of the Ideal World, or the Divine *Logos*, who has in himself the Essences and Ideas of all things, and in whom the same are perceiv'd by us and all Creatures.

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A  
SERMON

Preach'd in the  
ABBY CHURCH

O F  
BATH,

BEFORE THE  
Right Reverend Father in GOD,  
THOMAS,  
Lord Bishop of BATH  
and WELLS:

At his VISITATION held  
there *July* 30. 1689.

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SEYMOUR

ABBY CHURCH

B. A. T. H.

Right Reverend Bishop of Bay

ST. JOHN'S

Lord Bishop of Bay

and Western Islands

at the Station

## John 21. v. 15.

*So when they had Dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon Son of Jonas, Lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea Lord; Thou knowest that I Love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my Lambs.*

**T**HE Words consist of Three considerable parts. First, of a Question put by our Lord to St. Peter. Secondly, of St. Peter's Answer. Thirdly, of a Command by way of inference from it. The Question was, Whether St. Peter Loved him beyond the rest of his Disciples then present. This Demand of our Lord was not so high as were St. Peter's former *Professions* and *Pretensions*. This warm and Zealous Apostle had always profess'd a more than Ordinary Adhesion to his Lord and Master, and pretended to as great a *Supremacy of Love*, as his Successors do of *Knowledge* and *Jurisdiction*. He seem'd to be among the *Apostles* what the *Seraphim* are among the *Angels*, to outshine and out-burn not this or that vulgar Disciple only, but the whole Apostolical Order in Zeal, Courage, and Flames of *Divine Love*. For no less can that Eminent Profession of his import, *Tho all Men should be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.* But not having made good his high Pretensions, our Lord now puts the Question to him in terms more mode-

Mat. 26. 33.

moderate than those wherein he had before voluntarily boasted of his own Fidelity; and whereas he had before made shew of a *Superlative Love*, beyond *All* the Disciples, our Lord only asks him this Modest Question, *Lovest thou me more than these?*

The good Apostle having now partly from the late experiment of his own frailty, and partly from the manner of our Lords Question, learnt more Humility and Modesty, returns such an Answer as was short, not only of his *former Professions*, but even of the *Question* too. He does not reply, *Lord, thou knowest that I love thee more than these*. No, he dares not venture any more so much as to *determin* any thing concerning the *Measure* of his Love, but is contented barely to aver the *Truth*, and *Sincerity* of it. And for this he fears not to appeal at last to the *Divine Omniscience*, *Lord thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee*.

Our Lord takes the Answer, and does not at all question the Truth and Sincerity of it, only he gives him a *Test* whereby it might be tried and justified, both before *God, himself*, and the *World*, by subjoyning this Illative Command, *Feed my Lambs*, as it is in the Text, or as in the two following Verses, *Feed my Sheep*.

This whole intercourse between our Lord and St. Peter, may I conceive, as to the full stress and scope of it, fitly be reduced to this short *Hypothetical Scheme* of Speech, *If thou lovest me, feed my Sheep*. Like that of our Saviour, upon another occasion, to his Disciples in common, *If ye love me, keep my Commandments*. This under a shorter view takes in the full force of the Words,  
and

and I shall accordingly discourse upon them, as if they had stood in this Posture.

Hence then shall I take occasion to consider these three things, as naturally arising from the Words, and as no less pertinent to our present Concern.

First, The great Love of our Lord Christ to his Church, which he here calls *his Lambs*, and *his Sheep*, which he here commands St. Peter as he loved him, to feed ; and which lastly, he would not absolutely and finally commit to his Charge, till after *three distinct Inquiries* whether he truly loved him.

Secondly, I shall consider the *Command* here given, and shew the great Obligation that lies upon all spiritual Pastors and Guides of Souls to feed this Flock of Christ, which is so dearly beloved by him.

Thirdly, I shall consider the *Connexion* and *Dependence* that is between the *Practice* of this Command and the *Love* of Christ. *If thou lovest me, feed my Sheep.*

Lastly, I shall close all with an earnest exhortation to the Conscientious Practice of the Duty enjoyed.

The first thing I shall consider is the great Love of Christ to his Church. And certainly if there be any *Secret* in Religion fit for Angels to *Contemplate*, and too high for them to *comprehend* ; if there be any Love that has *Breadth* and *Length*, and *Depth*, and *Height* ; if there be any Love that *passes Knowledge* ; if there be any love that is *stronger* than *Death*, and *dearer* than *Life*, if there be any, lastly, that is *truly wonderful*, and that *passes love* not only of *Women*, but of the whole  
Creation,

*Creation*, 'tis this Love of our Lord to his Church. We have no Line long enough to fathom so vast a Depth, nor can Mortality furnish us with Ideas to conceive, or with Words to utter so deep a Mystery. If there be any words that can reach it, they must be such as St. Paul heard in his Rapture, strange Words, *ἀρρητὰ ῥήματα*, Words that cannot be pronounc'd by an Human Tongue, and that would be meer *Barbarism* to a Moral Capacity.

Ephes. 3.  
19.

But however, that we may take some Measure of that which really has none, and be able to frame some Notion of this Love of Christ, which, as the Apostle tells us, *passes knowledge*, we will exhibit a Prospect of it in a *Double Light* : First, in those verbal Representations which the Scripture gives of it : And Secondly, in those real and actual Proofs whereby Christ himself has express'd this his most excellent, and otherwise *incredible* Love.

As to the First : The Scripture we know is full of great things, and those set forth with as great and magnificent Expressions. The Rhetorick and Style of Scripture runs incomparably high, beyond that of any other Writings, in whatever it treats of. But there are three things more especially, in the description of which the Holy Spirit seems to *Labour*, and be at a *Stand* for *Expression*. And these are the *Glories of Heaven*, the *Miseries of Hell*, and the *Love of Christ* to his Church. These the Scripture represents under all the variety of Symbols, Figures and Images that can be supplied either from the *Intellectual* or *Material* World ; that so what is wanting in each single Representation, might be made up from the  
Multitude

Multitude and Combination of them, that if one should miss, another might strike us, to make, if possible, some impression of so strange and so concerning Truths upon the Minds of Men.

But the last of these, as 'tis most wonderful and mysterious (it being a greater Wonder that God should Love Man, than that either there should be so much Happiness in the Enjoyment of God, or so much misery in the Loss of him) so it is more frequently inculcated, and more strongly represented. So frequently inculcated is it, that were it not for the *Mystery* of the thing, and that there is no *Tautology* in Love, the Scripture would seem Chargeable with *vain Repetitions*. Every Page almost in Holy Writ breaths forth this *Mystery of Divine Love*; and besides that, there is one whole Book particularly imploy'd in the representation of it, by all the Flowers and Delicacies of the most exalted Poetry; it may be said of the whole Sacred Volume, that 'tis but one continued Expression of Love from Christ to his Church, one *Larger Canticles*.

And as 'tis thus frequently inculcated, so is it no less strongly represented. 'Tis represented by that which is the most proper *Effect*, and the last *End* and *Accomplishment* of all Love, by *Union*. For there are three most admirable Unions proposed to our Faith in the Christian Religion. The Unity of Essence in the Trinity, the Unity of Person in Jesus Christ, and the Union that is between Christ and his Church. The first of these is an Example and Prefiguration as it were to the second, and the second to the third. For we cannot better represent the Union of Christ with his

his Church, than by the *Hypostatic Union*, or the Union of the *Logos* with Human Nature.

For First, as in this Mystery the Plurality of Nature is consistent with the Unity of Person, so does Love effect the same Miracle in the Union between Christ and his Church. For here also we meet with a new *Theanthrophy*, a strange Composition of God and Man, two vastly different Substances, which without Confusion of either *Natures* or *Properties*, make up one and the same *Body*. For if Christ be *Head* of the Church, he is also one *Body* with it. And so St. *Austin*, *Totus Christus secundum Ecclesiam & Caput & Corpus est.*

Again, as in the Mystery of the *Hypostatic Union* there is a Communication of Idioms or Properties whereby what primarily and abstractly belongs to one, may secondarily and concretely be attributed to the other, as that God is Man, and Man is God, so has Love introduced the like Communication between Christ and his Church, which may be said to be *happy* and *glorified* in Christ, as he is said to *suffer* in his Church.

Again, as in the Mystery of the *Hypostatic Union* the *Word* uniting it self to Human Nature adorn'd and exalted it, not only by the Privilege of so sacred a Confederacy, but also with many distinct Graces and Excellencies, whereby it was necessarily tho not *forcibly* determin'd to love the Divinity, and highly fitted to be loved by it, so is it also in this Union between Christ and his Church. He has not only ennobled her by so sacred an Alliance; but is ever conferring upon her his Gifts and Graces, and will never cease to do so, till at length he present her to himself a

*Glorious Church*, without spot or blemish, and make Ephes. 5.  
 her in some measure worthy of so great a Love, 27.  
 and so intimate an Union. For 'tis observable,  
 that in Scripture Jesus Christ is set out as the  
 Author and Dispenser of all Grace; to him is as-  
 cribed the Work of the *Second* as well as of the  
*First* Creation; from his fulness we all receive;  
 and the Apostle says exprelly, that to every one of Ephes. 4.7.  
 is given Grace according to the measure of the gift  
 of Christ.

But not to pursue this *Metaphysical Parallel* any  
 further, let us return to consider this Union, as  
 'tis represented in Holy Scripture. Now there  
 are but two sorts of Union in the World, *Natu-*  
*ral* and *Moral*. And the Holy Spirit has made  
 Choice of the Closest of each, whereby to Figure  
 out to us the Union between Christ and his Church.  
 The closest of Natural Unions is that between  
 the *Head* and the *Body*; and the closest of all *Mor-*  
*al* Unions is that between the *Husband* and the  
*Wife*. And both these are by the Holy Spirit ap-  
 plied to this Mystery.

Thus is Christ oftentimes call'd the *Head* of  
 the Church, and the Church the *Body* of Christ.  
 Thus again is he styled the *Bridegroom*, and the  
 Church honour'd with the Name of his Spouse.  
 And because this *Latter* Figure carries in it more  
 of sensible endearment, therefore is it of more  
 frequent use, and withal of more *Ancient Date*.  
 For besides that *Adam* first open'd this *Mystery*,  
 and by his Miraculous Marriage typified to us  
 that of Christ with his Church, which came out  
 of the Wounded Side of our Lord, as *Eve* was  
 taken out of *Adam's*; the Prophets have also gi-  
 ven our Lord the Title of *Bridegroom* in the Old  
 Testa-



Testament. The 45th Psalm is a plain Spiritual *Epithalamium*, and so is the whole Book of Canticles, and the Holy Baptist, in whom both Types and Prophecie expire, calls him expressly by the Name of *Bridegroom*.

Strange Miracle of *Humility* and *Love* ! That ever God should come down to seek a spouse upon Earth ! Was it not enough, O Blessed Jesu, that thou wast one with the Father and Holy Spirit, in the Eternal Trinity ? Was it not enough that thou hadst made thy self one with our Mortal Flesh, by assuming our Nature, but that thou must yet heap Mystery upon Mystery, as if thou wert not yet near enough allied to us, must also make thy self one with thy Church ? But such is thy Love to Man, as not to be contented with a single Union with him ? And so great thy *Condescension*, as if thou need'st a Partner, to complete thy Happiness, and as if it were no more good for the second, than 'twas for the first Adam to be alone.

These are the two Principal *Figures*, under which the Scripture Pictures out to us the Love of Christ to his Church, and his Union with it. Not that they rise up to the height of the Mystery, but because they come the nearest of any to it. For indeed they fall vastly short, and give but a faint shadowy resemblance of what they are intended to represent. And therefore as we have hitherto represented the dearness between Christ and his Church, by that between the *Head* and the *Members*, and the *Husband* and *Wife*, so we may, and with better reason, invert the Order, and propose the *Former* as an Example and Measure for both the *Letter*. And 'tis observable that

that St. Paul does so : For, says he, *Husbands love Ephes. 9.*  
*your Wives, even as Christ loved the Church. And 25.*  
*again, No Man ever yet hated his own Flesh, but Ver. 29.*  
*nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the Church.*  
 Where you see the Love of Christ to his Church  
 is not, as before, set out by that of Married  
 Persons, and that of a Man to his own Flesh, but  
 these are set out and illustrated by the other. So  
 great and transcending all Love; yea, even all  
 Knowledge, is this Love of Christ to his Church.  
 But 'twill appear yet greater, if we take a  
 Prospect of it in the Second Light, namely in  
 those Real and Actual Proofs whereby Christ  
 himself has express'd this his most excellent and  
 otherwise incredible Love. And certainly they  
 are such as never *were, will, or can* be given by  
 any other Lover. For (to make the Prospect as  
 short as may be) was it not an amazing instance  
 of Love for the great and ever-blessed God, who  
 could neither be advantaged by our Happiness,  
 nor damaged by our Misery, to come down and  
 assume our Nature in its meanest Circumstances,  
 to live a needy and contemptible Life, and die a  
 painful and execrable Death, and all this to re-  
 concile a Rebel, to restore an Apostate? Indeed  
 the work of Man's Redemption, if we deeply  
 consider the whole Method and Contrivance of  
 it, is such an Heroick Instance of Love, and so  
 much exceeding that of his Creation, that 'tis  
 well Man was *Created and Redeem'd* by the *same*  
 good being, since otherwise his obligations to his  
 Redeemer being so much greater than those to his  
 Creator, he would be very much divided and di-  
 stracted in his returns of *Love and Gratitude.*

T

But

But let us reflect a little upon the *Life*, before we further consider the *Death* of our Redeemer. It was one constant Argument, one continued Miracle of Love. He lived as one purely *Dedicated* to the good of Mankind. All his *Thoughts*, all his *Words*, all his *Actions* were *Love*. His whole business was to *Glorify* his Father, and (which was his greatest Glory) to express his Love to Man, which tho at all times exceeding wonderful, yet toward the Evening of his Life it thick'en'd and grew stronger, like Motion within the Neighbourhood of the Center, and as then he *Prayed*, so he *Loved* yet more earnestly.

Luk. 22.  
44.

For 'twas then that he wept over *Condemn'd Jerusalem*, and bedew'd with Tears the Grave of *Lazarus*. 'Twas then that with desire he desired to eat the Passover with his Disciples, instituted a perpetual Monument of *Love*, his Holy Supper, and left another of *Humility*, by condescending to wash their Feet. 'Twas then that he comforted his Disciples with the variety of the Heavenly Mansions, with a Declaration that he himself was the Way, the Truth and the Life, with an assurance that their Prayers in his Name should be effectual, with a Promise of the Holy Spirit, and with a Legacy of his own *Peace*, to compensate for the Tribulation they should meet with in the *World*. 'Twas then, lastly, that he recommended the state of his Apostles, together with his own *Glorification*, in one and the same solemn Prayer to his Father, that he would preserve them in *Unity* and *Truth*, and at length *Glorify* them with the whole Body of true Believers with himself in Heaven. And all this at a time when one would have thought his own concern should

Joh. 17.

should have been his only *Meditation*, and Fear his only *Passion*; for now was he within view of his amazing sufferings, and the *shade* was just ready to *point* at the dreadful hour; and yet even now his Love was truly stronger than Death, and the Care of his Disciples prevailed over the Horrors of his approaching Agony.

Which he further shewed, by giving up himself to a cruel and shameful Death, for the Life and Salvation of the World. A Death ( to say no more of it ) of such strange Sorrow and Anguish, that the very *Prospect* of it put him into a *Sweat of Blood*, and the *induring* it made him *complain* of being *deserted* of his Father. And then that his Redemption might prove *effectual*, after his Resurrection, he gives Commission to his Disciples to go and publish it with its conditions throughout the world, and orders them all, as he does here *St. Peter*, to *feed his Sheep*. And lest the Benefit of his Death should be *again* frustrated for want of Power to perform the Conditions, presently after his Ascension he sent down the Spirit of Consolation upon his Apostles, and does continually confer *Grace* upon, and make *Intercession* for his Church. So tenderly affected was he toward this his Spouse, that even the felicities of Heaven could not make him forget her, as he further shew'd by complaining in behalf of his Church, when from the midst of his Glory he said, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* Which words shew him as much concern'd for the Wounds given to his *Mystical*, as for those he felt in his *Natural* Body.

And now since the Love of our Lord to his Church is so exceeding great, it certainly concerns

cerns all Christians, especially those whom he has intrusted with the care of his Church, to be alike minded. Which leads me in the second place, to consider the Command here given, and to shew the great Obligation that lies upon all spiritual Pastors, to feed this Flock of Christ, which is so nearly beloved by him.

*Feed my Sheep*, says our Lord to St. Peter, and in him to all the Pastors of the Christian Church, who are equally concerned both in the *Command* and in the *Duty*.

And that they are so, is already sufficiently concluded from what has been discoursed concerning the great Love of Christ to his Church. To make you therefore more sensible of this Duty, I need only propose to your Meditation  
 “ how affectionately our Lord loves his Church,  
 “ and how dear her Interests are to him, that out  
 “ of this his abundant Love, he has set apart a  
 “ distinct Order of Men on this very purpose, to  
 “ promote and further her in the way of Salvation;  
 “ that he has intrusted the care of her in  
 “ their hands, and has made them his Vicegerents  
 “ and Trustees; that ’tis a Charge worthy their  
 “ greatest Care, for which there needs no other  
 “ Argument, than that ’tis committed to them,  
 “ by him who knows the worth of Souls; that he  
 “ strictly commands them, as they have any Love  
 “ or Regard for him, to feed his Sheep; that  
 “ ’twas the very last Command that he gave them,  
 “ when he was just leaving the World, and upon  
 “ the very Confines of Glorification; and that  
 “ lastly, as this is the greatest Trust that was  
 “ ever by God reposed in Men, so there will be  
 “ the severest account taken of it at the last day,  
 “ at

"at the Great *Visitation* of the *Bishop of Souls*;

This is enough, if duly weighed, to shew the Obligation of this Command, and to conclude this part, were it not necessary to add something concerning the manner of discharging it. *Feed my Sheep*, is the Command given by Christ to the Pastors of his Church, and we have seen the obligation of it: But *how* are they to Feed them? I answer, First, by *Prayer* for their respective Charges both in Publick and in Private. This is the first thing belonging to the Pastoral Office, and accordingly with this St. Paul begins his Admonition to his Son *Timothy*, *I exhort therefore that* 1 Tim. 2.1. *first of all, Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions and giving Thanks be made for all Men.*

Secondly, by *Preaching*, with private Instruction and Admonition, as occasion shall serve and require: And here their first care should be to Preach nothing but what is *True*. Secondly, to confine their Discourses to *Useful Truths*, such as tend to the promotion of good Life, that which the Apostle calls *the Truth which is after Godliness*. 1 Titus. Thirdly, to deliver only *Plain Truths*. For there are many Truths which are highly useful, and have a very Practical aspect when they are once understood, which are not so easie and obvious to be so. These therefore ought as much to be waded as those which are not useful, because tho useful, *simply speaking*, yet *respectively* they are not. And upon these two latter accounts we should not trouble our Unlearned Auditors, either with Thorny Questions and Knotty Controversies which in themselves have no Practical Use, or with more refined Theories and School Niceties, which to them are as useless and unpractical as the other. To

Feed them with the *Former*, would be to give them *Stones* instead of *Bread*; And to Feed them with the *Latter*, would be like placing a Man in the Region of *pure Ether*; why, he can't *breathe* in it, and will starve by reason of the *overfulness* of his Diet.

Nor is it enough that the Truths we Preach be *Useful* and *Plain*, unless in the Fourth place they be deliver'd in a Plain and Intelligible *Manner*. For what signifies it that the things are in *themselves* Plain, if we make them obscure in our *expressing* them; we are all ready enough to laugh at the Poor *Frier* for going about to Preach the Gospel to *Beasts* and *Trees*; and are not they alike ridiculous, that order Discourses so as not to be understood by those that hear them? Don't they also Preach to *Beasts* and *Trees*? We ought therefore to consult the *Capacity* of our Hearers, and consider to *whom*, as well as *what* we speak.

And to this Plainness of Expression we would do well to joyn some degrees of *Warmth* and *Concernedness*. And this I rather recommend, because there are some that affect a cold, dead, careless and heartless way of Delivery. But certainly this has as little *Decorum* in it as it has of *Devotion*. For since the things we speak are supposed not only to be *Truths*, but *Concerning* and *Important* Truths, what can be more absurd, than to see a Man deliver a Sermon as drily and indifferently as one would read a *Mathematical Lecture*? 'Tis said of *John* the Baptist, that he was a *Burning*, as well as a *Shining* Light. And truly we have need of such in this Cold Frozen Age. Plain Sermons, Preached with Warmth and Affection, do more than the Best, Coldly deliver'd. You

Joh. 5. 35.

know

know the Story in *Eusebius*, of the Heathen Philosopher coming into the Council of *Nice*, who was baffled into Christianity by the meer *Warmth* and *Heartiness* wherewith the good Old Man address'd him. He could have resisted his Arguments, but not the Spirit and Zeal wherewith he spake. And this is all I shall think proper to remark to you upon the Preaching part.

The next way whereby the Pastors of the Church are to Feed the Sheep of Christ, is by duly administering to them the *Holy Sacrament*, which is their true Spiritual Food, the *Manna* that must sustain them in this *Wilderness*. This is the most proper way of Feeding them, for the Body of Christ is Meat indeed, and his Blood is Drink indeed.

There remains yet one way more of Feeding the Flock of Christ, without which the rest will signify but little, and that is by a good *Example*. Among the other Properties of a good Shepherd, our Saviour reckons this as one, that he goes before his Sheep, and leads them by his Steps, as well as with his Voice. There ought to be a Connexion between *Hear* and *Do*, but much more between *Preach* and *Do*. And he that is not careful of this, as he cannot expect to do much good to others, so he will certainly *Condemn* himself. To be short (for I hope I need not enlarge, speaking to Wise Men) a good Preacher, who is an ill Liver, is such a *Monster* as cannot be Match'd in all *Africa*. And for his State hereafter, I may leave it to be consider'd how great a Condemnation awaits him, whom not only the *Book of God*, and of *Conscience*, but even his own *Sermons* shall Judge at the last Day.

Joh 10.4.



These are the several ways of discharging this Precept, *Feed my Sheep*; to which however I think it necessary to add one thing more, and that is, that we Feed them *our selves*, and not by *Proxy*, or *Deputation*. For our Lord does not say to St. Peter, do thou get some body to feed my Sheep, but do thou Feed them thy self.

For however St. Peter's Shadow might do Cures upon the *Body*, it must be his *Person* that must do good upon the *Souls* of his Charge. To speak out plainly what I intend, *Non-residency* is one of the greatest scandals of the *Reform'd*; yea of the Christian Religion, contrary to all Reason and Justice, as well as Primitive Practice. And whoever are guilty of it, plainly shew, that they are Lovers of Ease, Honour or Profit more than Lovers of Christ. For certainly he that Loves Christ as he ought, will not think himself too good to feed his Sheep. Which leads me in the Third and Last place to consider the *Connexion* and *Dependance* that is between the *Practice* of this Command and the *Love* of Christ. Now this I briefly make out upon a double ground.

The *First Ground* is, because the Love of Christ will naturally ingage us to Love whatever he Loves; and consequently since his Church is so exceeding dear to him, 'twill ingage us to Love his Church; and if to Love it, then consequently to be diligent in Feeding it, that being the most proper instance of shewing our Love to it.

The *Second Ground* is, because the Person of Jesus Christ consisting of a Double Nature, God and Man, the Love of him must include the Love of his *Humaniety*, as well as of his *Divinity*. If therefore we Love Christ, we Love the Ho-

man

man Nature as well as the Divine; and if so, then we Love Man as Man, consequently all Men; and if we Love all Men, we shall desire and endeavour their Salvation, and accordingly take care to Feed them with the *Bread of Life*.

Upon these two Grounds it plainly appears, that there is a strong Connexion between the *Loving of Christ*, and the *Feeding of his Sheep*, and that such Pastors as do not well discharge the *Latter*, have no right of pretending to the *Former*. This is the *Test* whereby both *St. Peter's*, and every Spiritual Pastor's Affection to our Lord must be tried, *If you Love me, Feed my Sheep*.

Let me therefore exhort you all, as you love our Lord Jesus Christ, and as you desire to be Loved and Approv'd of by him, to a sincere and conscientious Discharge of your *Pastoral Duty*, to *take heed unto your selves and to all the Flock over which the Holy Ghost has made you Overseers, to Feed the Church of God, which he has purchased with his own Blood*. Let me beseech you to consider what you are, and what you should be. What you are by your *Character and Profession*, and what you should be in the *Exercise of it*, and therefore to take heed to *your selves*, to your *Doctrin*, and, above all, to your *Publick Life and Conversation*. For certainly it cannot be an Ordinary Measure of Religion that will serve our turn, who are concern'd not only to be *Good*, but *Exemplary*, and must Live well for *others* as well as for *our selves*; what therefore is *Perfection* in others, will be but *strict Duty* in us. The Devotion of our Ordinary Days ought to exceed that of their *Festivals*; and we should Live in as much Warmth of Religion as they Die. *ὅτι πάλαι παροχόμενοι ἐστὺν*

Tit. 2. 7.

τὰ πάντα καλῶν ἔργων, *In all things shewing thy self a Pattern of good Works :* That's our Rule, we ought to be Patterns and Examples of a Holy and refined Conversation. Let your Lamps therefore be always trimm'd, and your Lights always burning, and that with such *Brightness*, as to *shame* those that will not be *allured* by the *Glory* of the Flame.

And that you may the better do all this, let me desire you all frequently and seriously to meditate upon the Excellent *Example* of the great and good Shepherd Christ Jesus, whose Life was wholly employ'd, and at last laid down for the good of his Sheep. I pray you ( My Reverend Brethren ) consider this, and all that has been said, that so when this great Shepherd shall return to visit his Flock, you may all give up the same Account to him, that he did to his Father, *Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost.* Amen.

Joh. 17.  
12.

THE

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THE  
CHARGE  
OF  
SCHISM  
CONTINUED:  
BEING

A Justification of the Author of *Christian Blessedness* for his Charging the Separatists with *SCHISM*, notwithstanding the Toleration.

*In a Letter to a City-Friend.*

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THE  
CHARGE  
OF  
THIS  
COUNTY  
BEING

A full  
 and  
 complete  
 list of the  
 names of the  
 persons who  
 have been  
 charged with  
 the crime of  
 murder, and  
 the names of  
 the persons  
 who have been  
 charged with  
 the crime of  
 manslaughter,

In a letter to the City Engineer.

S I R,

**T**HE Information you give me concerning the great Clamour that is made by some in the *City* against our Friend the Author of *Christian Blessedness*, for continuing the Charge of Schism at this time against the *Separatists* from the Church of *England*, I am the more ready to believe, because I find he meets with a great deal of the like Treatment in the *Country*, as far as the Sphere of my Acquaintance or Intelligence reaches. I can hardly put my Head into any Company, but where I hear him either Passionately rail'd at by Popular uneducated Tongues, or gravely condemn'd by those of more sober and improved Understandings; who, though no Enemies to his *Person*, have yet but little Charity for his *Cause*. Nay, several who know nothing at all of the Book, and so cannot directly and expressly condemn it, do yet shew how ready they would be upon occasion to do so, by declaring their Judgments against the Proposition maintain'd in it.

For I find 'tis a thing generally taken for granted, that the Dissenters are now no longer under the guilt of Schism, however they might be charged with it before. For, say they, *the Tables are now turn'd*. They have now an Authentick Patent for their Separation, and may divide from you by Authority. And therefore let your Indictment run never so high, and be otherwise never so well proved, their Liberty will be their im-

immediate Discharge. For, *Sir*, you must know that the Toleration is generally supposed to lay all in *Common*, to put the Church and the Conventicles upon a square, and to acquit those that Separate, not only from the *Penalty*, but from the *Fault* of Non-conformity.

This Notion, I perceive, has found entertainment, not only in Vulgar Heads, ( who seldom think distinctly about any thing, but confound all things, whose Difference is not to be felt and handled, ) but also among those of good Natural sense, and who have taken a Turn or two of Scholastic Education, and understand something of the Measures of Reason and Consequence. Particularly I find this Conceit passes very current among Ladies and Gentlemen, who, for want either of Leisure or Ability, or Attention, seldom examine things to the bottom, but judge according to Outside and Appearance.

But this I do not so much wonder at, when I observe that Men of profess'd Study and considerable Learning are carried away with the same Fancy, which I find gets ground every day ; and let me tell you, *Sir*, among some others, besides those whose Interest is concern'd to have it true. I find some of these begin to talk very oddly and untowardly in this matter, and not according to their usual Clearness, and accuracy of Judgment, which they still retain in their other Discourses. But as for the Interested Parties, they catch at this Popular Plea of the Toleration with all the greediness imaginable, and insist upon it mightily, ( an Argument, by the way, that they distrust their other Defences, ) and are become down-right impatient of the Charge of Schism,

and

and think themselves not only highly Affronted; but greatly Wrong'd and Injured whenever they are tax'd with it, and as you know, Sir, are very angry with our Author for continuing the Charge. What? Charge us with Schism at this time of day, Now we are in Favour, Now the Government smiles upon us, Now we have the Law on our Side?

How far they have the Law of their Side, will be better understood from what is to follow. In the mean time I wish that some of those who are so incens'd against our Author, and so free in their Censures upon that part of his Book, would have took the Courage to appear against him in publick, which would have been a much fairer and more manly way than either to rail at him in Corners, ( which, by the way, are as little sought for by *Charity* as by *Truth*, ) or to pester him with Scurrilous and Abusive Letters without Names. This argues their *Fear* to be as great as their *Malice*, and that they diffide either to their Cause, or to their Skill in managing it. The truth is, they ought for their own Credit, as well as in Justice to the Author, either to have Suppress'd their Resentments, or to have Vented them in Publick. Which if they had done, I dare undertake they should not have been disappointed of an Adversary.

But it seems they have thought fit to make use of another Method, which though not equally declarative of their Sense, yet with the help of a little Spelling and Collating things together may serve to pick out enough of their Meaning. For as far as I can gather from what I observe, and from what I hear, the Sum of all that they say  
against



against our Author ( bating impertinent Cavils and Foul-mouth'd Reflections ) may be reduced to these three Heads

1. The Falseness of his Charge.
2. The Uncharitableness of it.
3. The Unseasonableness of it.

Which Treble Censure is grounded upon one Common Argument, because, say they, the Dissenters are Now, by Vertue of their Toleration, upon Equal Terms with the Church.

But, Sir, in the First place, how can that be, when One is *Establish'd*, and the Other only *Tolerated*? Is not Establishment more than Liberty? If by Liberty here were understood Allowance or Warrant to act ( which is the highest Sense of the word that the Persons concern'd stand for ) it would yet fall much short of Establishment, which does not only Allow or Permit, but Enjoyn and Require. Much more then if Liberty here be found ( as I believe it will ) to signifie only a Capacity of acting without Punishment. Liberty of *Allowance* is much short of Establishment, much more Liberty of *Impunity*. And how then are the Church and the Dissenters upon Equal Terms?

Some therefore, who better understand what they say, chuse to express themselves thus, That the Dissenters have as much Authority for their Liberty, as the Church has for her Establishment. Which implies not *Absolute* Equality, but only Equality of *Proportion*. Now this I readily admit. But what then? Therefore they are not guilty of Schism in Causelessly dividing from her Communion. I interpose the Term ( *Causelessly* ) not without reason. For if they say they have sufficient Cause for dividing from us, then they no longer

longer stand to their Plea of Toleration, but put their Cause upon another Issue, which I think has been already sufficiently examin'd and expos'd. But that which they stand for now by the nature of their Appeal, seems to be this, That they are not guilty of Schism, because of the Liberty they have by the Toleration, which must therefore be supposed to excuse them from Schism, though they Causelessly divide from us. For if they had just Cause for their Separation, then they would be excus'd from Schism without a Toleration, which then need not be pleaded. But this is the Plea that is now generally insisted upon for their discharge from Schism, which must therefore be understood with this Supposal, though they do Causelessly divide from the Communion of the Church. This therefore is the true and explicate Sense of their Plea.

The Dissenters have now as much Authority for their Liberty as the Church has for her Establishment; And therefore they are not guilty of Schism in Causelessly Separating from her. Now this Consequence I utterly deny, and Affirm that such Separatists are as much guilty of Schism now, after the Toleration, as they were before.

To make this Clear, we must, in the First place distinguish between the Law it self, and the Sanction of the Law. By the Law it self here I understand the bare Simple Proposition, where- in either the doing or the not doing such a thing is enacted. By the Sanction of the Law I understand those External Motives which are proposed and solemnly annex'd by the Law-giver to his Law as an ingagement to Obedience, that is, Rewards and Punishments. These Sanctions, tho

they are sometimes made a part of the Law, as when we say the *Penal Part* by way of Contradiſtinction to the *Preceptive*; yet properly ſpeaking, they are no part of the Law at all, but only Accessories or Appendixes prudentially added to it, as Expedients for the better inforcement of Obedience. The Law it ſelf is wholly completed in the Proposition, from which the Sanction is as much diſtinct as the Hedge is from the Incloſure, or the Ground which it incloſes.

This Diſtinction naturally leads us into another, as being dependent upon it. For if the Sanction be a diſtinct thing from the Law, then we muſt alſo, 2dly, diſtinguiſh between the Aboliſhing of the Sanction and the Aboliſhing of the Law, and between the Suspension of the Sanction and the Suspension of the Law, and much more yet between the Suspension of the Sanction and the Aboliſhment of the Law. If the Law and the Sanction were one and the ſame thing, yet the Suspension of the Sanction could not be an Aboliſhment of the Law, becauſe *Suspension* is not *Aboliſhment*. Much leſs then can the Suspension of the Sanction be an Aboliſhment of the Law upon the Suppoſition of their Difference. Theſe things therefore ought carefully to be diſtinguiſht.

From the Diſtinctions premixed, this Conclusion will neceſſarily ariſe, That the Directive or Preceptive part of the Law may ſtill remain in force, though the Penal part ( I ſpeak according to Common uſe ) be removed, whether it be by Aboliſhment or by Suspension. For ſince the Preceptive and the Penal part are ſuppoſed to be wholly diſtinct, 'tis impoſſible that a Change made in the One ſhould at all affect the Other,

unless you could suppose some Connexion or other to intercede between them. As for instance, the Soul and Body being supposed to be Substances really distinct, 'tis impossible that a Change in the One should at all affect the Other, unless there were such a Law of Connexion between them, that Certain Thoughts in the Soul should raise Certain Motions in the Body, and that Certain Motions in the Body should occasion Certain Thoughts in the Soul, which is what we call the *Vital Union* between Soul and Body. In like manner say I concerning the Preceptive and the Penal part of the Law, that upon Supposition of their real distinction 'tis impossible that a Change in the One should at all affect the Other, unless there should happen to be such a declared Connexion between them by the Will of the Legislative, that upon the Ceasing of the One, the Other also should Cease; or unless the Nature of the thing infer the Necessity of it. Neither of which may be pretended in the present Case, as I shall have Occasion to shew in the Process of this Argument. At present I suppose it, and do therefore say that the Preceptive part of the Law may, and will still remain in force, though the Penal part (which is distinct from it) be removed.

Whence it will further follow, that the Preceptive part of the Law does at present actually remain in full force. For all that a Toleration does or can do, is only to remove the Penalty, where there is an Establish'd National Church. It is not there a Liberty of *Allowance*, but only a Liberty of *Impunity*. I say where there is an Establish'd National Church. For indeed where there

is no Legal Establishment for the Publick Exercise of Religion, a Toleration would be a Liberty of Allowance, ( I mean as far as the State or Civil Law can give an Allowance in this matter ) but where there is such an Establishment, there it can only be a Liberty of Impunity. There it only suspends or takes away for a time the Penal part, which will not excuse from transgressing against the Preceptive, which, where-ever there is a National Establishment, still Lives, Breathes, Speaks, Commands, and Obliges too under *Law*, though not under *Civil Penalty*.

Every one knows, that has either Read or Thought any thing about the Nature of Law, that a *Toleration* is very much short of a *Dispensation*. But now a *Dispensation* does not Abolish the Precept of the Law, much less then may a Toleration be supposed able to do it. Indeed a Dispensation does some way affect the Preceptive part of the Law, and that is it whereby it exceeds a Toleration. It is indeed a present Suspension of it, not an absolute thorough Suspension, but a Suspension with relation to such a particular Person or Action, in respect of which, the present Command of the Law is interrupted. But now a Toleration does not so much as affect the Preceptive part of the Law, it has no manner of effect upon it, much less can it Abolish it, or Null the Obliging force of it. All therefore that it can do is only to remove the Penalty.

And this is the true Difference, and perhaps the Only one that can be assigned between a *Dispensation* and a *Toleration*. A Dispensation does, for the present, and to some intents and purposes, bind up or suspend the Preceptive part of the Law,

Law, and interrupts the Authoritative and Obliging Power of it, and thereby makes it not only consistent wit *Impunity*, but with *Innocency* to act against it. For it makes the Law as no Law with respect to the Person or Persons dispens'd with, and for the time while they are dispens'd with. But now a Toleration does not pass any such Effect ( indeed not any at all ) upon the Preceptive part of the Law. It neither *strikes* it, nor *is well'd* at it. All the Execution that it does, or it design'd to do, is upon the Penal part, which indeed for the time is wholly remov'd by it. So that a Dispensation does as much exceed a Toleration, as an Abrogation does a Dispensation. In that a Dispensation does do no more than Suspend the Preceptive part, it falls short of an Abrogation, which Absolutely and Universally removes it. And in that it does so much, it exceeds a Toleration, which only takes off the Penalty, without so much as touching either the *Substance* or the *Form* of the Law.

And though this be clear and plain enough by the Evidence of its own Light ; yet, I confess, 'tis some satisfaction to me, and it may be more so to others who set a greater value upon Authorities than I do, to find so great and so well-approv'd a Judge of the Abstract and general Reason of Law as the Celebrated *Suarez* to be of the same Judgment with me in this matter. For, says he, in his Book *De Legibus*, speaking of the Effects of a Dispensation of a Humane Law, *Dispensatio plus est quam Permissio, & Permissio proprie sumpta & secundum Communem usum, non est Dispensatio. Aliquando enim permittere non aliud significat quam voluntarie non impedire, quod non est*

Lib. 6. cap.  
11. p. 385.

*Dispensare.* Nam Deus permittit Peccatum, in quo non Dispensat. Aliter vero permittere significat id quod sinere impune operari malum, ut in Republica dicuntur aliqua peccata permitti; Et quando id fit ex decreto Legis, dicitur permissio esse Legis effectum. Illa vero non relaxat Legem, quandoquidem non excusat Culpam, quam propria Dispensatio tollit. Et ideo neque illa dicitur Dispensatio. A Dispensation is more than a Permission or Toleration ( for 'tis all one, both as to the import of the word, and Suarez's constant way of using it ) and a Permission properly taken, and according to Common use is not a Dispensation. For sometimes to permit signifies no other than voluntarily not to hinder, which is not to Dispense. For God does permit Sin in which he does not Dispense. Sometimes again to permit signifies the same as to suffer the doing of an Evil with Impunity, as some Sinners are said to be permitted in a Common-wealth. And when this is done by virtue of a legal Decree, then such a Permission is said to be the Effect of the Law. But this does not relax the Law, in as much as it does not excuse the Fault, which a proper Dispensation takes away. And therefore neither may this be said to be a Dispensation.

Suarez here distinguishes of a twofold Sufferance or Toleration; the Suffering an Evil to be done, or the bare not hindering the doing of it; and the Suffering it to be done with Impunity. And both these he sets below a Dispensation. The former kind of Toleration is the least that can be imagin'd, and indeed is so little as to be consistent with the strictest Kind or State of Government that is. All Governours do Tolerate at this rate, even God himself, who, as He says, does permit or not hinder the committing of Sin. The latter

latter kind of Toleration is a degree above the  
 former, as adding to it the doing with *Impunity*.  
 And this indeed is too much to consist with the  
 Strictness of Government, and therefore is not  
 used in every Kind or State of it. Neither God  
 nor Man do always Tolerate after this manner.  
 For indeed it is a Relaxation of the Government,  
 not as to the *Legislative*, but only as to the *Exe-*  
*cutive* part of it. But though it be so much great-  
 er than the former sort of *Toleration*, yet it is al-  
 so at the same time as much less than a *Dispensa-*  
*tion*, in that a Dispensation does, in some re-  
 spects, wholly suspend even the very Obligation  
 of the Law, which a Toleration does not so much  
 as Relax, or any way Affect, but only Suspends  
 the Penalty annex'd to the Transgression of it.  
 So that though it be some Mitigation of the *Go-*  
*vernment*, and thereby exceeds a bare simple Per-  
 mission, yet it is no Abatement of the *Law*, and  
 therein falls short of a Dispensation.

The short of this matter is, All Permission may  
 be consider'd either as of *Right*, or of *Fact*. Per-  
 mission of Right is the same with a Dispensation,  
 which disarms the Law of its present Authority  
 and Obligation, and makes it no Fault to do other-  
 wise than is Commanded. Permission of Fact is  
 twofold, either the bare suffering or not hinder-  
 ing the doing of an Evil, which may be call'd a  
 Simple Permission: Or the suffering it to be done  
 without Punishment, which is a *Toleration*. This  
 Latter Permission, though it be greater than the  
 immediately preceding, yet 'tis as much less  
 than the First, as reaching no higher than the  
 Sanction, whereas that puts a present restraint  
 upon the very Power of the Law.



This I take to be a true and distinct Idea of Toleration, both as it is in its own proper nature, and as it stands in relation to other Changes that concern the Administration of the Law. From whose Authority and Obligation it does not in the least diminish, but only lays a restraint upon the Execution of it. It does not devest the Law of any part of her Sovereignty, but only *Sheaths* up her *Sword* of Discipline; it does not Silence her *Voice*, but only Stays her *Hand*. In short, there is nothing more nor less in it, than a Suspension of the Penal part of the Law.

This is all that it *can* do, and perhaps more than it *ought*. For I believe there ought to be no such thing as a Toleration, and that 'tis more than either the Church or the State can rightfully grant. For not to insist upon that Trust which seems to be repos'd in them, to defend and secure both Unity of Faith and Unity of Worship; if there ought to be a Toleration, then there ought to be no Establishment, ( for to what purpose is an Establishment, whose Order must never be executed? ) But 'tis a strange thing if Human Laws may not be allow'd to oblige to the same thing to which the Divine Law is acknowledg'd to Oblige, that is, to Ecclesiastick Unity. Which because required by the Divine Law, ought also to be required by Human Laws, and consequently there ought to be no such thing as a Toleration. And besides, those that say there ought, seem to me to be guilty of a Contradictory, Self-inconsistent Proposal, and not rightly to understand what they would have. For if they will have Liberty of Conscience granted to any, then certainly the Supreme Authority of the Nation must be allow'd

this

this Liberty. And then let us suppose ( as well we may ) that he thinks himself Obliged in Duty and Conscience to use the Power that is in his hands, to suppress all Religions but the true one, that is, all but that which he himself conceives to be true. And what then will become of the Toleration ? Nor ought the Magistrate to be blamed for so doing. For having once allow'd in general that every Man ought to have Liberty of Conscience, you ought not to think it hard that the Magistrate assumes this Liberty of acting according to his Conscience, though by doing so he restrains and hinders yours, as he certainly will in case he make use of the same Liberty. So that Absolute and Universal Liberty of Conscience is a down-right contradictory, inconsistent Supposition ; which one Consideration, by the way, is sufficient to overthrow all that a Late Author has pleaded in its behalf.

But I shall pursue this no further, as being only a Digression from my Present Concern. What I stand for now, is this, That a Toleration, when it is granted, implies no more than only a Removal of such Penalties as the Law would otherwise inflict upon those who Disobey it. That it does not either Abrogate, or Suspend, or Dispense with the Law, but only bridles and reins up the Execution of it. All which is to be understood with the fore-mention'd Condition, *where there is an Establish'd National Church.*

And this ( notwithstanding the Toleration ) is the present Case in *England*, where there is a Church Establish'd by the Law of the Land, and invested with several Temporal as well as Ecclesiastical Rights and Priviledges, where the Publick

lick Liturgy stands Authorized by several Acts of Parliament, where Articles of Religion and Constitutions and Canons Ecclesiastical are also Confirm'd by the same Authority, where the Acts of Uniformity remain unrepeal'd as before, and where even the Dissenters themselves are all required to pay Tithes to the Publick and Legally-appointed Ministry. Which is also a plain and certain Argument that they are required to attend upon it, and conform to it. For is it imaginable that the Laws should Oblige them to Contribute their part to the Support and Maintenance of that Worship, to which they do not enjoin them to Conform? This would be against the very Supposition of an Establishment, and would place the Church and the Conventicle upon an equal ground indeed, that is, it would make neither of them *Establisht*, but both only *Tolerated*. But they confess the Church to be *Establisht*, and so indeed she is as much as ever; and therefore the only Change made by the Toleration is, that the Penal part of the Law is, for the present, laid aside. As for the Preceptive, that stands where it did, and Obliges under Sin, though not under Civil Penalty.

And if so, then those who now divide from this Church establisht by Law, which Law does also require their Communion with it, are true and proper Transgressors against the Law; and if they do it Causelessly, are also guilty of the Breach of Church-Unity, that is, of *Schism*, notwithstanding any Publick Order for the not inflicting the Punishment otherwise due to them for so transgressing. This cannot excuse them either from Disobedience to the State, or from *Schism*

in

in the Church, with whose Establishment they are still Obligated to Conform as far as Lawfully they may, though not accountable to the Law for their Non-conformity. Thus the Jews were justly taxable with disobedience to their Law in the matter of Arbitrary Divorce, though for some Prudential Reasons tolerated in the Practice of it by *Moses* their Chief Magistrate. The Effect of which Toleration ( as our Saviour himself expounds it ) was not *Innocency*, but only *Impunity*.

Against what has been hitherto discours'd, I know but of one Objection that a Man would not be Ashamed to Urge, or Impertinent to Answer, or that deserves the Expence of Ink and Paper. But there is another which I must first take in my way, because 'tis thrown upon me, and is very loud and importunate for Satisfaction, which must therefore, I think, be given it for quietness sake.

In the first place then it is pleaded, that this is no *Ordinary Toleration*. That it is not a bare Supine Neglect to animadvert, a kind of Drowsie fit, or Nodding of the Government, no, nor a design'd and deliberate Connivance only, nor yet a Private act of Indulgence declared by the Will and in the Name of the Prince alone; But that 'tis an Indulgence granted and settled by an Act of the whole Legislative, by the joint Concurrence of King and Parliament; that 'tis a Toleration by *Law*, by the same Law upon which the Church itself is erected, and by which it stands. This is the Common Popular Objection, and there is not a Woman, or a Shopkeeper, but what is Big with it.

Now

Now I grant the Dissenters that they have a Toleration settled by Law, and that therefore this is no Ordinary Toleration, and I know they are not a little puffed up with it. And by the way, Sir, 'twould make even a very grave Man smile to see how those Men who have been hitherto such Despisers and Vilifiers of a *National Establishment*, are now lifted up with the Concept of a *National Liberty*. Of what advantage this may prove either to themselves, or to the Nation, or to the genera Interest of Religion, I leave to wiser Heads to Conjecture, and to Time to shew; but in the mean while I fancy this their Plea, from the Extraordinariness of the Toleration, will do 'em but little service. For 'tis the unhappiness of this Objection that it proceeds upon a wrong State of the Question. The Question is not concerning either the Kind or the Degree of the *Authority*, but concerning the Nature and the Extent of the *Grant*; not by what they are Authorized, but to what, whether to act Allowedly and with Innocence, or only Unrestrainedly and with Impunity? And to what purpose then do they insist upon the Greatness of the Authority?

If it be said, that this is no Mistaking the State of the Question, but an Inferring the thing denied, *viz.* Liberty of Allowance, from the Greatness of that Authority whereby this Solemn Toleration is granted: I answer, that then the Inference is grossly False and Illogical. 'Tis certainly a very pleasant way of Arguing, to infer the greater extent of the Grant from the Greatness of the Authority whereby it is made, as if a Lesser Grant might not be the Effect of a Greater Authority.

Sup-

Suppose that instead of *Moses*, God himself had been the Author of the Toleration concerning *Arbitrary Divorce* among the Jews. This Toleration was indeed given by *Moses* without any Divine Commission for it, as far as appears. But suppose it had been given by God himself. It will be readily granted that such a Toleration as this would have been of much greater Authority than the other, indeed of the greatest in the World. But would it therefore have been to any higher Purpose or greater Effect? No, that does not follow. *Moses* his Toleration reacht as far as Impunity, and a Divine one would have reacht no further. It would not have produc'd any other Effect, though perhaps it might have been a further Security and Establishment of the same. Though the Authority it self be Greater, yet the thing granted by that Authority may be the same that is otherwise granted by a Lesser; and if there be nothing else in the Business but only a greater Degree of Authority, it must and will be so. And thus 'tis in the Case before us. Though a Toleration by Act of Parliament be of greater Authority than a Toleration by the sole Will and Pleasure of the Prince, yet it is not to a greater Effect. And though the Dissenters have now as much Authority for their Liberty, as the Church has for her Establishment, yet 'tis only for Liberty, that is, ( as appears by what has been said ) *Impunity*.

When therefore 'tis pleaded that this is no Ordinary Toleration, 'tis plain that there is a double meaning in the Proposition. It may be understood either as to the *Authority* of it, or as to the *Effect* of it. If as to the Authority, that indeed

deed is true, but nothing at all to the purpose, as being beside the State of the Question. If as to the Effect; that I affirm and have shewn to be false. The Effect of this Toleration reaches not an Inch further than that of a less Solemn One would have done; perhaps, considering some particular Restrictions whereby it is qualify'd, not so far. But to be sure it can extend no further, the greatest Effect of both being only Exemption from Punishment. So that you see this Objection is quite disarm'd, and indeed is too weak and empty to abide any longer Trial.

The truth is, I should not have kept it so long under Examination, were it not for the Popularity of it, and that great Noise that is made about it. 'Tis not its *Moment*, but its *Importance* that has procured it so full a Hearing. For indeed in it self it is weak and silly enough. Though yet I think it is the Best by much that is used, or that the Men I am dealing with have Invention enough to urge. But I will be so kind to them, for once, as to put a Better Objection into their hands; and if they think I do not propose it enough to their advantage, let them take it and manage it themselves.

You may please to remember, *Sir*, that a little further backward, speaking of the Distinction that is between the Sanction of the Law, and the Law it self; I said 'twas impossible that a Change in the One should at all affect the Other, unless there was a Connexion between them, arising either from the declared Will of the Legislative, or from the Nature of the thing it self.

Now in this I may seem to have laid a Foundation for a very strong Objection. For it may be plead-

pleaded that there is such a Connexion, not from the Will of the Legislative declaring such a dependence between the Law and the Sanction, that upon the Ceasing of one, the other also shall Cease: This, I suppose, will not be pretended, nor do I see any room for such a Pretence. But from the very Nature of the thing it self so requiring.

For it may be said, that although the Sanction of the Law be, as we have shewn, a Distinct thing from the Law it self, that is, the Penal part from the Preceptive, yet it is Essential and Necessary to the Obligation of it. And therefore that which removes the Sanction, does also by Consequence remove the Obligation of the Law; And consequently since a Toleration (as is acknowledg'd) removes the Sanction of the Law, it does also by Vertue of that remove the Obligation of it, the Latter not being able to stand without the Former, any more than the Body is to live without the Soul.

I confess if the Sanction of the Law were necessary to the Obligation of it, then notwithstanding all the real Difference that is between them, that which takes away the Sanction, would also unhinge the Obligation, as that which takes away the Soul destroys also the Life of the Body; and consequently the Toleration, by taking away the Sanction, must of necessity be allow'd to take away the Obligation too. In this there can be no great Difficulty, or Dispute. All the Question will be concerning the *Leading* Proposition, whether the Sanction of the Law be necessary to the Life and Obligation of it. Here will be the last Pinch of the Difficulty, as will be better discern'd,



cern'd, if we Analyze the Argument, by Casting it into a Logical Form and Order; wherein it will appear thus:

If the Toleration takes away the Sanction of the Law, it also takes away the Obligation of it.

But according to you it takes away the Sanction of the Law;

Therefore it takes away the Obligation.

The Consequence is denied, and thus proved;

That which takes away the Sanction, takes away the Obligation.

Therefore if the Toleration takes away the Sanction, it also takes away the Obligation.

The Antecedent is denied, and thus proved:

If the Sanction of the Law be Necessary to the Obligation of it, then that which takes away the Sanction, takes away the Obligation.

But the Sanction is necessary, &c.

Here the Consequence is granted, but the Minor is denied;

Which was the Head and Knot of the Objection, and whose Truth comes now to be Examined.

It is a Common Question among Morallists, Civilians, and Casuistical Divines *Utrum Sanctio Penalit sit de Essentia five de Ratione Legis? Whether a Penal Sanction be of the Essence or Reason of the Law*; By which, I suppose, they do not mean, as the terms seem to import, whether it be of the inward Form and Constitution of the Law, (for 'tis plain that it is not;) but whether it be a Necessary Condition to the Obligation of it, the same thing that is now under Consideration.

I do not remember that *Snarez* takes any notice of this matter, which I cannot but wonder at in a Person that undertakes a just and adequate Account of the Nature of Laws, and who often descends to the discussion of Points of much lesser moment. Though what his Judgment was in the Case, may be sufficiently Collected from what he discourses concerning the several ways whereby Laws may suffer a Change. Among which I do not find that he has any Mention of the Removal of the Penalty, which he could not have omitted, if he had thought that the Sanction of the Law was necessary to its Obligation. For then the Removal of it would have caus'd either an Abrogation or a Suspension in the Law, as is urg'd in the Objection. But the Question is not so overlookt by Others; and they generally answer in the Negative, that the Sanction is not Necessary to the Obligation of the Law. I say generally. For I know there are some few that say that it is Necessary, and that the Law is but a mere *dead Letter*, a Body without a Soul, if it have no Sanction. Nay there are some that advance one step higher, and say that the Sanction is not only necessary to the Obligation of a Law, but that it derives its whole Obligation from the Sanction.

That the Latter of these Assertions is not true, is, I think, as certain as I would desire any thing to be. For I consider, that if the Law derived its whole Obligation from the Sanction, then these grand Absurdities (not to mention any other) would unavoidably follow.

First, That any Law would Oblige, let the Matter of it be never so wicked and unjust, or

the Authority whereby 'tis made never so incompetent, provided it were arm'd with a sufficient Sanction. For the Sanction being supposed to be the only Fountain of Obligation, that being present, and in such measure as is requisite, the Obligation must needs follow, as every Effect does upon the Being of its intire and adequate Cause.

Secondly, It would also follow, that no Law could oblige *constantly*, unless it were backt with the greatest Penalty that is absolutely possible. For since the Law is supposed to have all its Obligation from the Penalty, then where there is the greater Penalty, there will be the greater Obligation; and consequently if the Case should so happen, that a Man should threaten me if I do *not* transgress the Law, with a greater Punishment than the Law does in case I do, I am then discharged from the Obligation of the Law, ( as being under a greater Obligation ) and may innocently transgress it, though it were the Law even of God himself. Which at one blow would strike off the *constant* Obligation of the whole *Jewish* Law. For the Law of the *Jews* being ratify'd and confirm'd to them only by Temporal Penalties, and those not always the greatest, even of the same Kind and Order; if a *Jew* should happen to be tempted to transgress the Law ( as he easily might ) by a greater Punishment than the Law would inflict upon him for transgressing it, upon this supposition, that the Law receives its Obligation from the Penalty, it would follow, that he would be released from the Obligation of his Law, which I think is Absurd enough. But to this I further add :

Thirdly,

Thirdly, If the Law be to receive its Obligation from the Sanction, then we must suppose it therefore to Oblige, because it makes it Reasonable or Eligible for a Man to do so or so, that he may avoid such a Punishment, for that is all the engagement to action that the Sanction can be supposed to add. But if this be all, this is not to Oblige in *Duty*, but only in *Point of Prudence*, which indeed is not properly to Oblige at all, since otherwise all rational *Inducements* would be *Laws*. Indeed the Proposal of a Penalty may be a good Ground of Persuasion why a Man should do so as the Law directs. But it can be no more, it cannot lay an Obligation upon the Conscience, or make it Sin to do otherwise. It may move, determine, and in some Cases secure the *Choice*, but it cannot Oblige the *Will*.

To say therefore that the Law Obliges by and from the Sanction, is in effect to say that it does not Oblige at all, since then it could Oblige only by way of Persuasion and rational Inducement, which indeed is not strictly and properly to Oblige. The truth is, upon this Supposition the most Excellent Law of the most Sacred Authority in the World would Oblige no otherwise than the Demand of a Thief upon the Highway. The Thief bids me Deliver, or he'll Pistol me. The Law bids me do thus, or I shall be Punish'd. I yield up my *Money* to the *Thief*, to avoid being Pistol'd; and I yield my *Obedience* to the *Law*, to avoid being Punish'd. 'Tis possible here that the *Motive* of Action in both Cases may be the same, viz. the avoiding of Evil. But I hope no body will be so Gross as to say, that the *Obligation* in both Cases is alike too; that

the Law Obliges no otherwise than the Command of a Thief when he comes to Rob me. And yet this must be said, if it be true, that the Law has its Obligation from the Sanction; for then 'tis plain, that all its Obligation comes to this, That it makes it reasonable and eligible for me to do such an Action to avoid such an Evil, and so does the *Thief*.

Fourthly, If the Law Obliges purely in Vertue of the Sanction, then 'twill follow, that the Law will Oblige no further than the Sanction reaches; Consequently it will not Oblige the Supreme Magistrate, who is acknowledged not to be subject to the Sanction of the Law. But this is more than the greatest Sticklers for Prerogative will allow, and indeed is against the general Sense of the greatest Masters of Law, whether Common or Civil, who generally yield the Supreme Magistrate to be under the *Directive*, tho not under the *Coercive* Power of the Law. And if so, then the Preceptive does not Oblige by Vertue of the Coercive, since 'tis allow'd to Oblige where the Coercive does not reach.

Fifthly, This *Hypothesis* of the Law's receiving its Obligation from the Sanction, will, in the Consequence of it, make all Laws *purely Pen*, that is, such as do not oblige Absolutely, to the Fact, but only Conditionally, either to the Fact or to the Penalty; and which therefore are equally satisfy'd either by doing what is Express'd, or by suffering what is Intail'd upon the Omission of it. For if the Law be supposed to Oblige by Vertue of the Penalty which it proposes, then its Obligation comes to this, That I must do such a thing, because otherwise I must suffer such a Punishment.

nishment ; which is as much as to say, that if I do not such a thing, I must suffer such a Punishment ; which will again at last be resolv'd into this, that either I must do so, or suffer so ; which though it Obliges me *Disjunctively*, leaves me at full Liberty as to the *Determination* of my Choice. Which expresses the true Form and Nature of a *pure penal Law*. But I suppose it will not be said that all Laws are purely Penal. For then there would be no Sin but only where the Penalty is declined or resisted ; the Consequence of which again would be, that all the Sin that is in the World would only be against *Human Laws* ; and that there would be no such thing as Sinning against God, because the *Divine Justice* can neither be evaded nor resisted. Which is a Consequence that would make strange Alterations, and introduce as strange Confusions in the System of the Moral and Intellectual World.

Sixthly and Lastly, If the Obligation of the Law proceeded from the Sanction, then would follow, that I am therefore Obligated to do, because I must Suffer for not doing : But this is so far from being true, that the *Reverse* of it is so. For I must therefore Suffer for not doing, because I was Obligated to do. For I must Suffer, because I Sinn'd, otherwise my Suffering would be unjust. And I could not Sin if I were not under an Obligation ; which being thus Pre-supposed and Antecedent to the Necessity of undergoing the Penalty, ( which is what I call the Sanction, ) cannot possibly be founded upon it, or proceed from it.

This last Argument proves not only that the Law does not derive its *whole* Obligation from the

the Sanction, but also that no *Part* or Degree of it is thence derived. For if the wole Obligation be ( as is supposed ) Antecedent to the Penalty, then 'tis plain that no part of it is or can be derived from it. To which I further add, That the End of the Sanction is to move and engage Men to pay that Obedience to the Law which they owe. 'Tis indeed one of the forcible and violent ways of recovering a *Debt*, a Debt which Men owe to the Law, and which, if they did not owe it, could not be justly exacted from them under a Penalty. Here then is Duty and Obligation supposed ( in Order of Nature at least ) as Antecedent to the Sanction, and to which the Sanction is to serve as a *Means* to the End. And therefore 'tis most certain ( if there be any thing to in the Measures of Reasoning ) that the Law does not deriye its Obligation, or any Part or Degree of it from the Sanction. And this I take to be Vertually at least contain'd in those well-known Words of the Apostle, *Wherefore ye must needs be* *Subject, not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience sake.* There is, I know, some Dispute concerning the *Meaning*, and concerning the *Extent* of the former Clause ; but whatever be meant by Subjection here, and how far soever it is to extend, this in the mean time is certain, that this Subjection, whatever it be, is by the Apostle press'd from a double Principle, *Wrath* and *Conscience*, which he plainly distinguishes one from another, as two different Grounds and Inducements to Subjection. Ye must needs be subject not only for *Wrath*, but also for *Conscience*; that is, not only to avoid Punishment, but also out of a Sense of Duty and Obligation. Which

Rom. 13.

being here made not only a distinct, but a further degree of Argument for Subjection, 'tis plain that in the judgment of the Apostle the Obligation of the Law is not from the Sanction; because if so, he need only have said, *Ye must be subject for Wrath*, which would have been sufficient, as including the other. But whereas he makes a Contradistinction between them, 'tis evident that he that is subject only for Wrath, is not subject for Conscience; and consequently that Obligation in Conscience does not proceed from Wrath, but from some other Principle.

If it be then demanded, Whence does the Law receive its Obligation? I answer first, that 'tis enough for my present purpose to have shewn that it does not receive it from the *Sanction*. But if a more positive Answer must be given, I say that the Law has its Obligation from the Authority of the Law-giver, who by vertue of his Authority has a Right to be Obey'd, and to exact Obedience by Punishments in all his just Commands.

And this they will at length be driven to acknowledge, who derive the Obligation of the Law from the Sanction. For when they say that the Law obliges by and from the Sanction, they must be understood to mean if their Sense be drawn out more at length, that the Law obliges me to do so, because it obliges me to suffer for not doing so: But pray how comes the Law to oblige me to the latter, to suffer for not doing so? Is this by vertue of any other Sanction? But so we might run on to Infinity. It must be therefore by something else. And what should that be but the Authority of the Law-giver? And if this be



thought sufficient to Authorize the Sanction, why should it not also Authorize the Law?

If it be further askt, whence has the Law-giver his Authority? I answer, If he be a Creature, he has it from God, whom I suppose to be the sole Fountain of all Power. But if the Law-giver be God, he has it Originally and Independently in himself. But whether it be by the mere *Super-eminency* of his *Nature*, as some say, or by the *Benefit* of *Creation*, as others, let them dispute that abound with more leisure than I do, and want better employment.

But though the Sanction does not give the Law its Obligation, or any part of it, may it not however be *necessary* to it? Yes, if made so by the Will of the Legislator (as I said before) Establishing such a Connexion between them, that upon the Ceasing of the One, the Other also shall cease. But not in any wise from the Nature of the thing. For if it be of it self Necessary, it must either be as a *Cause*, or as a *Condition*. That it is not Necessary as a Cause, we have sufficiently proved already, by shewing that it has no part in effecting or producing the Obligation of the Law. If therefore it be Necessary, it must be Necessary as a Condition. But that it is not, I will now briefly shew.

By a *Condition* I understand that, which tho it has no Causal influence upon the Effect, yet it so determines the Efficient Cause to act, as that without it it will not act. As for instance, the opening of a Window, though it be not the Cause of inlightning the Room, ( for it does Efficiently inlighten it, ) yet 'tis the Condition of it, as being that without which the Sun will not inlight-

ten it. Or to come somewhat nearer home, the Promulgation of a Law, though it be not the Efficient Cause of its Obligation, yet it is the Condition of it, as being that without which the Law will not oblige. Now the Question is, Whether the Sanction of the Law be in this sense necessary to the Obligation of it?

To which Answer, By no means. For since the Obligation of the Law is supposed to owe its Birth not to the Sanction of it, but to other Causes (which has been proved already) there can be no manner of reason pretended why the Sanction would be a Condition necessary to the actual obliging of it, but only as it may be esteemed a Sign that such a Proposition is the Will of the Legislator. For the Law having its whole and full Authority within its self independently on the Sanction, needs only a *publick Sign* that 'tis indeed the Will of such a Power to make it actually Obliging. If therefore the Sanction be necessary, it must be necessary as a *Sign*. But that end being already sufficiently answered and satisfied by the *Promulgation* of the Law, it cannot pretend to any such necessity, and therefore to none at all. And accordingly we see, that even a solemn Promulgation it self, when it ceases to be necessary as a *Sign*, ceases absolutely to be necessary, as appears in the Instance of the Law of Nature; which because it may be and is otherwise known, than by a solemn Publication of it, renders that Circumstance wholly unnecessary.

The sum is, if the Sanction be necessary, it is necessary as a *Publick Sign*, that being the only thing supposed to be further wanting, where the Law is otherwise sufficiently Authentick. But it

is not necessary on that Account, because of the Promulgation, which fully and directly serves to that End. And therefore it is not at all necessary.

But may not the Sanction be necessary as a Sign, where the Law is *not* promulgated? To this I answer, first, That the Fate of the present Cause is not concern'd in the issue of this Question, or Laws being sufficiently promulgated. But suppose it were concern'd, it need fear no danger from it. For the Question proceeds upon a contradictory Supposition. It supposes the Law to be promulgated and not promulgated at the same time. For if the Sanction be necessary as a Sign, then it must make the first discovery of the Law, which till then must not be supposed to be known. And yet it must too, and that before the Sanction can pretend to be a Sign. For the Sanction cannot pretend to that Office till 'tis known, and it cannot be known till after the Law is known. So to know the Sanction, is to know that such a Penalty is by the Law annexed to such an Action, which presupposes the Law to be known. And how then can the Sanction be necessary as a Sign, where the Law is not promulgated? The very Supposition implies a Contradiction. Whence I further conclude, That 'tis impossible that a Sanction should ever be necessary as a Sign to the Obligation of the Law; which as it receiv'd not its Obligation from it, so it may and will oblige without it, since from what has been discours'd, it clearly appears that it is no way necessary to the Obligation of the Law, either as a Cause, or as a Condition.

I say, to the *Obligation* of it. For I do not deny but that a Sanction is very necessary to the *Enforcement*, and better Success of the Law; and that therefore 'tis very expedient that all Laws should have their Sanctions; partly that by them the greatness of the Obligation may be rated and estimated ( it being the general Prudence of Law-givers to annex greater Penalties to more concerning and important Precepts ) and partly that by them Men might be the more easily and securely contain'd within the Limits of their Duty; which without some Penal Restraint every little appearance of Interest would tempt them to transgress.

And yet even this is only an *Accidental* Necessity, introduc'd by the badness of the World. For were Men as they shou'd be, *Wise* and *Good* ( which till the *Millennium* I despair to see ) they would discern and be satisfy'd of the Reason and Equity of the Law; and that alone would be a sufficient motive to Order and Obedience. But when they are either so stupid as not to see the good end of the Law, or so profligate as not to regard it, then comes in this Expedient of the Sanction, arming the Laws with Penalties where- by they may be enabled to revenge themselves upon those unconsidering dissingenuous Persons that do them violence.

And indeed, considering the great and general Brutishness and Degeneracy of Men, how very alienated they are not only from the *Life of God*, but even from that of *Natural Reason* too, 'tis very fit it should always be thus; and that all Laws, as well as those of *Mount Sinai*, should have their *Thundrings* and *Lightnings* to awake and

and alarm the Passions of such Men, who having lost their *Reasons*, have now nothing else to be taken hold by. But this, I say, only proves a Sanction necessary to the better Inforcement, and not to the Obligation of the Law.

To which if any one shall yet think it necessary, I shall only further press him with one sensible Absurdity, which perhaps may signifie more with some Apprehensions, than an abstracter way of reasoning: It is this, That upon this Supposition it would follow, that if God himself shou'd impose any Command upon a Creature, without annexing a Penalty in case of Disobedience, he would not be able with all his Authority and Divine Supremacy, to oblige that Creature. And *will* any Man, *can* any Man have the Impudence or Impiety to say so?

Suppose that when God gave that Command to *Adam*, concerning the not eating of the Tree of Knowledge, he had not added that other Clause ( which was the Sanction of the Law ) *In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.* Will any Man presume to say that *Adam* would not have been obliged by that Divine Command, but might have tasted of the forbidden Fruit without Sin? He must have but very little reverence for the Majesty of God, and as little sense of the sacredness of his Authority who would adventure to say so. And yet thus he must say if it be true ( what is contended for by some ) that the Sanction is necessary to the Obligation of the Law. For whatever is necessary to the Law as such, is necessary to every Law, whether Human or Divine. He therefore that holds the necessity of the Sanction to the Obligation of the Law,

Law, must say (if he will be consistent with himself) that the Command of the Great God would not have obliged *Adam* in case there had not been a Penalty annex'd to it. If he does not say so, I should smile at his *Inconsistency*; and if he does, I should tremble for his *Impudence* and *Irreverence*.

But from a Supposition to descend to a Matter of Fact, what will such a one say to the *Tenth Commandment*, to which (as the Author of the *Christian Blessedness* has rightly observ'd) there was no Sanction annex'd. Will he say, that this Precept stood as a Cypher in the *Decalogue*, without passing any Obligation upon the *Jews*? This indeed would make much to the honour of the Divine Wisdom; and represent God as a very notable Law-giver, to Usher in a Law with so great Solemnity, and afterwards write it with his own fingers upon Tables of Stone, when it could signifie nothing but only the filling up of a Number. And yet this, as absurd as it is, he must say, that will make the Sanction necessary to the Obligation of the Law. If this be true, then the *Tenth Commandment* did not oblige. But it seems the great Apostle was of another Judgment, when he said, *I had not known Sin but by the Law: For I had not known Lust, except the Law had said, Thou shalt not Covet.* It seems then that Lust was a Sin, and that by vertue of the *Tenth Commandment*, which is here alledged by the Apostle to prove it so, which therefore did oblige, since without Obligation, as well as where there is no Law, there can be no Transgression. If it be said, that although the *Tenth Commandment* had no Temporal Sanction or Civil Pen-

ty

ty annex'd to it, like the other Nine, yet it had an *Eternal* Sanction, namely the Rewards and Punishments of a future Life, and that 'twas by vertue of that Sanction that it became Obligatory. I answer, that this could not be any Sanction to the *Jews*, to whom it was not plainly reveal'd, though it be now to us Christians who have a full and exprefs Revelation of it. A Sanction not Publish'd is no Sanction, as much as a Law not published is no Law; that is, to any real Effect or Purpose of Government. Indeed of the two, Publication seems more necessary to the Sanction than to the Law. For oftentimes the natural and inward Reasonableness of the thing may in a great measure supply the place of an *Express Law*, as it did for a long time before there was any Express Law given; but now Punishment is a more Arbitrary thing, and that depends more upon the Will of the Governor; and therefore unless there be an Express Declaration of it, as there will be no certain ground of expecting it, so there will be little or no influence derived upon Men from it. Which makes it absolutely necessary that the *Sanction* should be expressly declared and published, otherwise it will neither have the *Nature* nor the *Effect* of a *Sanction*.

It may indeed be the secret intent and purpose of the Law-giver to inflict such a Punishment for such an Offence; and perhaps in some Cases this may be justly done without declaring beforehand that he will do so; and this may be said to be the Sanction of the *Law-giver*; but unless this be openly and plainly declared, it can be no Sanction of the Law, nor can it be a Sanction to those that are to be govern'd by it. If



If God in his first solemn intercourse with *Adam*, after the Precept given him, had reserv'd that other Clause to himself, *In the day that thou sleepest thou shalt die*; or had communicated this his Will and Purpose to an *Angel*, or to any other Being, but not to *Adam* himself, could this have been said to have been in any respect a *Sanction* to *Adam*? No certainly, because not manifested to him whose concern it was. Nor for the same reason could the other be said to be a *Sanction* to the *Jews*.

It must therefore either be said that the Tenth Commandment did not oblige the *Jews* ( which I think would be an intolerable Assertion, and without expressly against the sense of the Apostle, declaring Lust to have been a Sin by virtue of that Commandment ) or that it obliged them without any *Sanction*, and consequently that the *Sanction* is not necessary to the Obligation of the Law: Which is the thing that I plead for.

If it be said, that though the *Sanction* be not necessary to the Obligation of the Law in general, nor consequently to the Obligation of all Laws; yet it must be necessary to the Obligation of *Human Laws*, because *Human Laws* do not oblige under Sin, and therefore must oblige only under Penalty, and that therefore such Laws without a *Sanction* will not oblige. I answer, first, That this Objection proves a great deal too much; for upon this Supposition the Law would not oblige to Action even *with* a *Sanction*, for it would not so oblige at all. But we suppose here the Law to have such an Obligation, and say that the *Sanction* is not necessary to it, and consequently that the removal of the *Sanction*



tion does not remove the Obligation. Our present Argument therefore is not concerned in this Objection. We are here enquiring what Alteration the Toleration has made in the state of things, by removing the Sanction of the Law, whether it has thereby removed the Obligation too? We say it has not, but that if the Law had any Obligation before, it has so still, because the Sanction is not necessary to it. But whether it had or no, belongs not to our present Consideration ( which is only concerning the Effects of the Toleration ) but to the *Absolute Merit* of the Cause.

But however, since it happens to come in my way, this I say further, That it is not at all necessary that Human Laws should be purely Penal, because they are *Human*, and consequently that 'tis not necessary that *all* Human Laws should be so. For when-ever they are purely Penal, 'tis acknowledged that they oblige to Punishment, otherwise they would oblige to nothing; which is the same as not to oblige at all, and consequently would be no Laws. But how come they to oblige to Punishment, but only by the Will and Intention of the Law-giver invested with competent Authority? And if by that he could oblige to Punishment, then by the same, had he so pleased, he might have obliged to Action. For this is a most unquestionable Rule, That he who can oblige to Punishment, can also, if he pleases, oblige to Action; nay much rather, it being a much greater thing to oblige to *Suffer*, than to oblige to *Do*.

Human Laws therefore are not necessarily to be supposed purely Penal as they are Human, nor  
confe-

consequently ought all Human Laws to be so esteemed. 'Tis not from the different Authority of the Law, but from the different Intention of the Law-giver, that any Law becomes purely Penal. 'Tis therefore by meer Accident that Human Laws are any of them purely Penal, and not from the Specifick Nature of the Laws themselves, which for any thing that is in their proper Natures may oblige in Conscience, as well as any other Laws. And that they do so oblige (unless where 'tis otherwise express'd or insinuated in the Form of the Law) is most certain, the Law of God requiring us to obey the Laws of Men, where they are not contrary to the Law of God. But I need prosecute this no further, since the Excellent Bishop Sanderson has given the World sufficient Satisfaction in this Point, in those judicious Discourses of his, *de Legum Humanarum Obligatione in Conscientia*.

If it be further urg'd (which I think is the last Reserve of this Objection) That the Removal of the Law does involve the Removal of the Sanction; and why then will it not hold as much the other way, that the removal of the Sanction should remove the Law? To this I answer, That there is a great Disparity in the Case: The Sanction is made purely for the sake of the Law, whom it is to guard and defend, and so serves to it as the Means does to the End; and consequently if the Law be abolish'd or suspended, &c. the Sanction must needs fall in proportion with it. But now the Law is not made for the sake of the Sanction, but for the good of those who are to be govern'd by it. And therefore though the removal of the Law removes the Sanction, yet it

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does

does not therefore follow that the removal of the Sanction should in like manner carry with it the removal of the Law. To which, after all I might add, That 'tis impossible that the whole Sanction of Human Laws should ever be removed. For since the Law of God requires Obedience to the Laws of Men where-ever it may be lawfully paid, and threatens those with the Punishments of another Life, who are disobedient to publick Order and Government in *this*, though the Human Sanction should be taken away, yet the Divine Sanction would still remain; and as long as that does remain, the whole Sanction cannot be said to be removed. This I might say for a *serve*, and I do not see what Answer can be made to it; but I think my Cause is otherwise so well grounded, that I need not insist upon this Plea.

From the whole course of this Argument ( which I believe has receiv'd no damage by the management ) it fully and clearly appears, that the Sanction of the Law is not only a thing really distinct from it, but also no way necessary to its Obligation; and therefore that the removing of the Sanction does not imply or involve the removal of the Law, and consequently that the Toleration by removing the Sanction does not remove, no nor so much as interrupt the Obligation of the Law, to which the Sanction has been shewn to be not at all necessary. Which I think breaks the Neck of the Objection, and he that need be a very skilful *Artist* that shall see it again.

Well, but suppose ( which you see is not the Case ) that the Law which enjoyns Conformity to the Religion and Church establish'd, were by the Toleration perfectly remov'd, and the Preceptiv

ceptive part of it taken away as well as the Penal; yet neither upon this Supposition ( which is indeed a very great Concession and Abatement ) would a Toleration excuse those from Schism who would be guilty of it without it.

For Sir, these Men are to consider, if they have not already consider'd it, that we do not derive the Grounds of Obligation to Ecclesiastick Communion only from the Authority of the *Civil Law* ( though that must be allow'd to add a considerable weight to the Obligation ) but also and chiefly from that of the *Divine Law*; which I conceive to be as Positive and as Express in requiring Unity and Conformity of Worship, as in requiring any Religious Worship at all.

The necessity of this is by St. *Paul* press'd upon the *Ephesians*, from the Unity of that *Body* where-  
 of they were Members, from the Unity of that *Spirit* which was to them the Common Principle  
 of Life and Action, from the Unity of that *Hope*  
 to which they were call'd, from the Unity of  
 that *Lord* to whose Service they were all devoted,  
 from the Unity of that *Faith* which they all profess'd, from the Unity of that *Baptism* whereby  
 they were grafted into the Church of Christ;  
 and lastly, from the Unity of that *God* who was  
 the Father of them all, who was above all, and in  
 them all. Every one of which Heads of Argument might justly deserve the Consideration of a  
 particular Discourse, but that I am willing to  
 suppose my Reader so apprehensive, as not to  
 want to have things laid out to him more at  
 large.

Accordingly the Christian Church is always represented by Figures that express the greatest  
 Unity,

Unity, not only between *that* and *Christ*, but also between *Fellow-Christians*. This is said to be that One Body into which we are all Baptized by One Spirit, and which is said to be fitly joyn'd together and compacted. This is that Spiritual House built upon the Foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the Corner-stone, in whom all the Building, fitly framed together, grows into an Holy Temple in the Lord. 'Tis represented also as one Flock, under one Shepherd Jesus Christ, whose last and most Solemn Prayer was for the Unity of the Church; which must therefore be supposed to be highly agreeable to the Mind and Will of God, otherwise our Saviour would not have pray'd for it so earnestly and with such Solemnity. Tho I question very much whether this Solemn Prayer of Christ will be fully heard and answer'd till the Glorious State of his *Millennial* Reign upon Earth. However in the mean time 'tis most certain that 'tis the Great Duty of us all to endeavour after that State of Unity which our Saviour pray'd might be among his Disciples. Hence it is that Schism is Condemn'd as a Work of the Flesh, and those that Separate are said to be Sensual, not having the Spirit; and Christians are admonish'd to mark and shun them that cause Divisions, and are withall Comanded to mind or think one and the same thing, *τὸ ἐν ἑνὶ αὐτῷ φρονεῖν*, to stand fast in one Spirit, with one Mind, to walk by the same Rule, to be joyn'd together in the same Mind, and in the same Judgment, and with one Mind and Mouth to glorifie God the Father, with a World of Precepts and Exhortations to the same purpose, which every one may find that does but open the Bible.

Now

Now what can all this signifie? Nothing certainly less than this, That the Unity of the Church is so Sacred a thing, that it ought to be preserv'd by all Lawful means, and that no Separation ought to be made in it without absolute and evident Necessity. In one word; that where 'tis Lawful to Communicate, there 'tis Sinful to Separate. Which is more expressly deliver'd in that Apostolical Canon taken notice of by the Author of Christian Blessedness; *If it be possible, as much as lies in you, live peaceably with all Men.* This takes in the whole Latitude and Capacity of Society, the State as well as the Church; in both which, by vertue of this Precept, Peace and Unity is to be maintain'd as far as is Possible, and therefore without question as far as is Lawful. And if the Peace of the State is to be preserv'd as far as is possible, then certainly much more the Peace of the Church.

Since then the Scripture is both so frequent and so express, I might say also so earnest and passionate in inculcating the Necessity of preserving the Unity of the Church, and in Condemning all unnecessary disturbances of it; it is most certain that the Divine Law, without the Confirmation of the Civil, is a sufficient Obligation to Church Unity, where-ever it may Lawfully be held. Every Christian Church that proposes Lawful terms of Communion has, by the Law of God (though the Civil Law be silent in the case) an undoubted Right to the Conformity of all that are within the Pale of her Establishment, who cannot withhold it from her without incurring the Guilt of *Schism*, which, according to the general sense of the Christian World, is nothing

else but an unnecessary Separation; and then is Separation unnecessary, when Communion is lawful. The Argument in Form is,

Whoever separates unnecessarily, is guilty of Schism:

But whoever separates where he may lawfully Communicate, separates unnecessarily;

Therefore whoever separates where he may lawfully Communicate, is guilty of Schism.

The Minor Proposition is plain by its own Light, since there can no Moral necessity be pretended for not doing what may Lawfully be done. And the Major Proposition is clear by the Light of *Scripture*, which presses and enjoins the Peace and Unity of the Church to the very utmost degree of strictness, even as far as is possible. Whence the Conclusion necessarily follows, That whoever separates where he may lawfully Communicate, is guilty of *Schism*.

This is so clear and evident, that the most moderately affected in Point of Church-Unity and Conformity could never shut their Eyes against the Light of it, though they endeavour'd to wink never so hard. Particularly Mr. *Hales*, a very Free, and for the most part, Judicious Writer, and one very remarkable for his *Moderation*, especially as to all Church-matters, and who writes of Schism with all the tenderness imaginable, handling it as if he were feeling the Edge of a Razor: And yet after all his Endeavours to reduce it into as narrow a compass as he could, by making as few guilty of it as might be, he could find nothing to justify Separation but only Sinfulness of Communion. As may appear from several Passages that occur in his Tract of Schism.

For,

For, says he, Page 195. For the further opening the Nature of Schism, something must be added by way of difference to distinguish it from necessary Separation; and that is, that the Causes upon which Division is attempted, proceed not from Passion, or Distemper, or Ambition, or Avarice, or such other Ends as Human Folly is apt to pursue, but from well-weigh'd and necessary Reasons; and that, when all other Means having been tried, nothing will serve to save us from guilt of Conscience, but open Separation. So that Schism, if we would define it, is nothing else but an unnecessary Separation of Christians from that part of the visible Church of which they were once Members. Again, says he, Page 198. Unadvisedly and upon Fancy to break the Knot of Union between Man and Man, especially among Christians, upon whom, above all other kind of men, the tie of Love and Communion does most especially rest, is a Crime hardly pardonable; and that nothing Absolves a man from the guilt of it, but true and unpretended Conscience. Again, says he, Page 209. What if those to whose care the execution of the Publick Service is committed do something unlawful, &c. yet for all this we may not separate, except we be constrain'd personally to bear a part our selves. The Priests under Eli had so ill demean'd themselves about the daily Sacrifice, that the Scriptures tell us, they made it stink; yet the People refused not to come to the Tabernacle, nor to bring their Sacrifice to the Priest. For in these Schisms which concern Fact, nothing can be a just Cause of refusal of Communion, but only to require the execution of some unlawful or suspected Act. Again, says he, Page 215. Why may I not go, if occasion require, to an Arian Church, so there be no Arianism express in their Liturgy? And again,

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Lastly,



Lastly, Page 227, speaking of Conventicles, says he, *It evidently appears that all Meetings upon unnecessary occasions of Separation are to be so styled; so that, in this sense, a Conventicle is nothing else but a Congregation of Schismatics.*

Page 86.

From these and other like Passages any one may be satisfy'd that Mr. Hales, with all his Moderation, could not but see, that where Separation is not necessary, there Communion is; and that to depart from the Communion of a visible Establish'd Church, with whom you may lawfully Communicate, is to be guilty of Schism. And so much seems to be granted even by the Author of the Letter of Toleration, who defines Schism to be *an ill grounded Separation in Ecclesiastical Communion, made about things not necessary.*

'Tis true indeed, by *things not necessary*, this Author means (as he afterwards explains himself) things not expressly contain'd in the Rule, making him a Schismatick that separates from a Church, because that Church does not require what the Scripture does not. But this will come to one and the same thing. For why is he a Schismatick that makes a Separation from a Church for not requiring more than is expressly contain'd in Scripture, but only because he might Communicate with that Church notwithstanding this her *frugality* and *reservedness*, and consequently his Separation was unnecessary? This is the thing into which the Schism of such a Separatist must be at last resolv'd. And then for the same reason, why is not he as much a Schismatick that separates from a Church, that *does* require more than the Scripture expressly contains, provided it be not contrary to the Rule of Scripture,

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Since with this Church he may also lawfully Communicate, and therefore has no Necessity for his Separation? 'tis the *unnecessity* of the Separation that in both Cases makes the Schism. So that this Notion of our Author, though at first sight it seems to offer somewhat New, resolves it self, at long run, into the Old Common Notion of Schism, which has all along obtain'd in the Christian World.

Where-ever therefore there is no necessity of separating, there the Church has a Right to Communion, which to with-hold from her is Schism, or else there is no such thing as Schism in the World. This Right the Church of *Rome* had before her falling into her gross Corruptions, and this Right the Church of *England* and all other Churches have that are reform'd from them. And this Right every Lawfully Constituted Church has by vertue of the *Divine Law*, which is her Original *Charta*, and which of it self lays upon all Christians a sufficient Obligation to Church-Unity, though there should be no Civil Authority to back and inforce it.

For indeed, unless it were so, how could there be such a thing as the *Sign of Schism* in the Apostles Times, and in the more Primitive Ages of the Church? There was then no Civil Law to Oblige Christians to Church-Communion; so far from this, that the Edge and Point of the Civil Sword was turn'd directly against it. The State and the Church then not only moved in two *Different*, but in two *Opposite* Spheres. And yet we find that in those early times the Sin of Schism was as much condemn'd, and Schismatical Persons as deeply branded as in any of the after Ages.

Ages. Nay more indeed, because of the singularity and strangeness of the Crime. Punishment indeed they could not so well be, for want of the Concurrence of the Civil Sword; which was not then in a *Christian* hand; but they were censured and condemn'd, and according to the Apostle's Admonition, those were *mark'd* and *avoided* that caused Divisions.

And therefore though we should allow the Present Toleration to Silence the Civil Law, whereby Conformity is injoin'd, ( which yet from the Premises appears to be far otherwise, ) yet since the Divine Law requiring all possible Unity, stands untancell'd, ( for sure the Toleration won't be pretended to reach that ; ) those that make Causeless and unnecessary Divisions, will still be guilty of Schism, notwithstanding the favour of the Toleration, which I am afraid will prove but an indifferent Plea for Separation at the Last day to those that have no better.

What then, you'll say, is the Effect of a Toleration? Or what can be supposed to be the just and reasonable intent of it? I answer; As to the *Effect*, it cannot release at all from any preceding Obligation. It does not release so much as from the Obligation of the *Civil Law*, whose Penalty it only suspends, much less does it release from Obligation to the *Divine Law*, with which it has nothing to do, and upon which it has no manner of Effect. It does not therefore discharge any from Obligation to Conformity, who would not be discharged without it. All indeed are actually eased by it; that's an universal and indifferent Effect, but none are discharged or unobliged.

Then as to the Intent of it, all that it can be reasonably intended for is to ease those *few* from Penalties, ( for I doubt they are not *many*, ) who are so unhappy as really and sincerely to be persuaded in their Consciences that 'tis not Lawful for them to joyn in Communion with the Church of *England*. Though the Toleration does actually Ease all indifferently, yet 'tis for the Ease of such only that a Toleration can be justly or reasonably intended, whose Condition indeed would be as *pitiable*, as I am afraid it is *rare*.

But even here the Toleration has no other Effect than barely to *Ease* them. If they are with-all releas'd from any Obligation, 'tis not by Vertue of the Toleration, but by Reason of something else, namely their unhappy Judgment and Persuasion in thinking our Communion unlawful ; which however in it self false and erroneous, must be allow'd to bind in Conscience while 'tis their Misfortune to be under it. This is the thing that releases from Obligation, whenever there is any Releasment ; The Toleration only Eases them from suffering the Penalty of Nonconformity. And 'tis for *their* Ease only that it can be reasonably intended.

But as for those who are satisfy'd of the Lawfulness of Communicating with the Establish'd Church, ( who I fear make the *greatest* part of those that separate from it, ) they are still oblig'd under pain of Sin, though not of Civil Characterisement, to Communicate with it. And if they do not, 'tis not a Toleration, or Act of Indulgence, though granted by the highest Power upon Earth, that can excuse them from the Sin of Schism, at least before God. Nor do  
such

such Men *deserve* the favour of a Toleration.

And now, Sir, from the Measures laid down, it plainly appears, that if the Separatists from the Church of *England* were guilty of Schism before the Toleration, (which, whether they were or no, depends upon other Grounds, and is not now to be disputed over again,) they are as much guilty of it now, there being no Change made by the Toleration as to the Preceptive, but only as to the Penal part of the Law. Which may suffice to clear the Author of *Christian Blessedness* of the first Imputation laid against him, that of a *false Charge*.

The two others will be more easily, and more briefly dispatch'd.

The next thing therefore for which our Author is blamed is the *Uncharitableness* of his Charge. This indeed is a heavy Censure, and ought to be well-grounded, or else it will recoil upon those that make it. But I think there has been that said upon the former Objection, that will scarce allow any room for this.

For if the Author's Charge was uncharitable, it must be either because of the *Matter* of it, or because of the *End* and *Design* of it. Not certainly upon the account of its Matter, because that appears to be *true* ; for the proof of which, I appeal to the Reason and Argument of the preceding Discourse. And if they fix the Uncharitableness of it upon its End and Design, they themselves will bring their own Charity in question by judging so severely of the Intentions of the Author, which they cannot be supposed to be privy to.

For how can they pretend to know the Author's

thor's Thoughts and Designs? Did he ever Communicate his Intentions to them? Or will they Judge by *Inspiration*, and pretend to the Gift of Divining and Conjecturing, as well as of *Praying* by the Spirit?

I that am intimately acquainted with the Author, and know more of his Principles and Sentiments, Thoughts and Intentions, than any of those that take the Liberty of Censuring and Condemning them, do verily believe that in his continuing the Charge of Schism upon the Separatists, he intended nothing against Charity, but rather the greatest Charity and Good-will.

I know 'tis his most deliberate and well-assured Sense, that if ever there was or can be such a Sin as Schism in the Church of Christ, they of the Present Separation are *truly* and *deeply* guilty of it. And since it came fairly in his way, he thought himself obliged in Charity to reprehend them from it, not knowing what good effect a Candid and Rational Admonition might have upon those ( for he had Charity enough to hope there might be *some* such ) who were not quite over-run with the Humour of Opposition, nor arm'd Cap-a-pee with Prejudice. And being withal in the mean time assured of the Duty of Fraternal Corréption; and how much that concerns every Christian ( as being the Duty even of a Jew ) in *any* wise to rebuke his Brother, and not Lev. 19. 17. to suffer Sin to lie upon him.

And, If I may have leave to divert a little from the Defence of my Friend to my own Justification, I think I may safely say that I am now in Prosecution of the very same *Charitable* Design. For though I acknowledge my self to have had  
some

some regard to the Reputation of my Friend, which I think has suffer'd without Cause, and which to Assert and Vindicate, I take to be a very Innocent Design; yet I can say (as far as I know the inward Springs of my own Actions) that the Principal End and Aim of this Undertaking was to further that great and dear Interest of Christianity, for which our departing Saviour so earnestly and so solemnly pray'd to his Father, the Interest of Ecclesiastick Unity. To further this, I say, is my main Design, both by *awakening* the Consciences of those who by the Favour of the Government striking in with their own Natural humour of Contradiction, may be tempted against the inward Sense and Light of their Minds to transgress against the great Christian Obligation to Publick Order and Unity of Worship, and by *undeceiving* and *disabusing* others, who by the Impunity of the present Toleration may be so far imposed upon us as to fancy themselves releas'd from any such Obligation. Both which, I think, are very Good, very Charitable, and very Christian Designs.

But to return: I think, Sir, there appears now to be as little reason for taxing our Author with *Uncharity* as with *Error*. For his own part, I believe he is Conscious to himself of neither. But if he is Guilty, I dare say he would be glad to be Convinc'd, that so he might *Rectifie* the One, and *Repent* of the Other. For the present he thinks there is so little occasion for either, that if he had not only Charg'd our Separatists with Schism, but with the most unjust and unreasonable Schism that ever was made in the Christian Church, he thinks it would have been no Slander. And he has Commission'd me to say that

he is ready against any Opposer to make it good.

But though the Author's Charge was neither false, nor Uncharitable, yet was it not something *Unseasonable*? So indeed some say, who say neither of the other. Nor is this an inconsiderable Exception, if true. For as every thing is Beautiful in its Season, so is Season the Beauty of every thing, and there is nothing Beautiful out of it. Actions Materially good, and wherein we mean well, are oftentimes utterly spoil'd merely by being *Misimed*. But why, I pray, was this Charge so unseasonable? What, because the Separation was grown very wide, and by reason of the relaxation of the Government growing still every day wider; because some were invited to it (as they are to other Sins) by Impunity, and others began to make that a Plea for its Lawfulness; because it began to set up for one of the *Court-fashions*, and was growing to be not only a Privilege of the Saint, but the Accomplishment of the Gentleman; because some used their Liberty as a Cloak for their Maliciousness, and almost all as an Opportunity to serve the Interest of their Cause; because, lastly, that Church and State which were so lately rescued from the Jaws of Popery, were now in as Critical Point of Danger from the Incroachments of the Separation; was it therefore out of season to Charge the Separatists with Schism? Now I always thought that the most proper Season to admonish Men of their faults was when they were not Rife and Epidemical, and when they had most Temptations and Opportunities of committing them; and when the Commission of them would threaten the greatest Danger and Mischief.

This



This has been generally thought the most proper Season of Admonition by all wise Men in all other Matters, and why not in this? 'Tis the necessity of Admonition that at any time makes it seasonable; and then there is most need of it, when the Manners and Ways of Men are most disorderly and irregular. The more corrupt therefore and degenerate the Age, the more seasonable is the Reproof. And indeed, if the general prevalency and fashionableness of Vice be enough to make Admonition unseasonable, 'tis now high time, considering the Moral state of the World, that not only all Writing, but all Preaching too were laid aside. But this I suppose is a consequence which those that blame our Authors Charge as unseasonable will not admit; whence it follows ( whatever in partiality to their own concern they may be induced to say ) that even by their own measure it was not really *unseasonable*.

But 'tis further said, that this was a Treatment altogether unexpected and unlook'd for. They expected now as much favour from the Pulpit and the Press, as they found from the Government; and that there should now be no other Discourses about them, but such as were *Humbling, Complying*, and tending to *Moderation*, and not to have the old business of Schism reviv'd again. This was as much contrary to Expectation, as to Inclination and Humour; and was it not enough to vex any body to be so disappointed? That it was enough, the Event shews; but whether it *ought* to be, may admit more question. But I'll tell you a Story.

Causin's  
Holy  
Court, part.  
3. pag. 435.

While *Theodora* possessed the Empire of *Constantinople* with her Son, who was yet in minority, one named *Merhodius*, an excellent Painter, an

*Italian*

*Italian* by Nation, and Religious by Profession, went to the Court of the *Bulgarian* King named *Bogoris*, where he was entertain'd with much favour. This Prince was yet a Pagan, and though tryal had been made to Convert him to the Faith, it succeeded not, because his Mind was so set upon Pleasures, that Reason could find but little access. He was excessively pleased with Hunting; and as some delight in Pictures to behold what they love, so he appointed *Methodius* to paint him a *Piece* of Hunting in a Palace which he had newly built. The Painter, seeing he had a fair Occasion to take his opportunity for the Conversion of this Infidel, instead of Painting an *Hunting-piece* for him, made an exquisite Table of the Day of Judgment. Wherein he represented that great Solemnity with all its Circumstances of Terror.

In the end, The day assigned being come, he drew aside the Curtain, and shewed his Work. 'Tis said, the King at first stood some while pensive, not being able to wonder enough at the strange Sight. Then turning towards *Methodius*, What is this? said he. The Religious Man took Occasion thereupon to tell him of the Judgments of God, of Punishments and Rewards in the other Life; wherewith he was so moved, that in a short time he yielded himself to God by a happy Conversion. Now whether this Device of the Painter was *unseasonable* or no, or whether the advantage of the Design and of the Event would excuse the *Disappoint:ment*, I leave to the Reader to judge.

And thus, Sir, having fully clear'd my Friend from the treble Indictment laid in against him,

by shewing his Charge of Schism to have been neither *false*, nor *uncharitable*, nor *unseasonable*, I shall now, for a Conclusion of all, address myself to the *Dissenters* in a word or two, concerning their Behaviour under the present Toleration. Not what it *is*, or has been (for that is well enough known) but what it *ought* to be.

Some, it may be, who are not all over Argument-Proof, moved with the Reason of the foregoing Considerations, may be ready to ask of me, what would you then have us to do, or how shall we behave our selves under the present state of Things? It seems indeed to be as you say, that the Relaxation of the Government makes no Change in the Obligations to Conformity; but if we should lay down the Separation, and come over to the Church, what are we the better for the Toleration? And is it reasonable that there should be a Toleration, and we not the better for it? What, was the Toleration granted, not to be enjoyed? Is it like the Tree of Paradise, good for Food, and pleasant to the Eye, and withal planted within our reach, and yet not to be meddled with? Shall we be so unkind to our selves, as not to embrace an opportunity of Ease and Liberty? Or so ungrateful to the Government, as not to make use of that Priviledge of Indulgence which the kindness of our Superiors has vouchsafed us? What would you have us do?

I answer in one word, Do *now* as you *ought* to do *before*. For since the Toleration (as has been proved) makes not any the least Alteration in those Obligations to Church-Unity that are derived either from the Law of the State, or from the Law of God, but all things as to that stand

now

now in the same posture as they did, 'tis plain that your Behaviour also ought to be the very same now that it ought to have been before the Toleration. If the Points of the Compass stand now as they did then, without any *Declension* or *Variation*, 'tis plain that you ought to steer the same Course now, as you ought then. If you ask what that is? I answer,

*First*, Lay aside as much as possible you can all manner of *Prejudice* that may arise either from Natural Temper and Complexion, or from Education, or from long Custom to a contrary way; or from blind Regard to the Authority of some Men, for whom, perhaps, you have had a more early than just Veneration; or from Humour, or from Passion, or from Interest, or from whatever else may bribe and corrupt the genuine native Sense of our Minds. For unless the Scale hang even, 'tis to no purpose to weigh any thing in it.

*Secondly*, When you have thus truly divested your selves of all Prejudice, and reduced your judgments to an even poise, then apply your selves seriously and deliberately, impartially and sincerely, soberly and in the fear of God to consider and examin the State and Constitution of our Church, and the Terms of her Communion, whether they are lawful or no. But be sure you do not this by advising only with Books of your own way, or by consulting only with Guides of your own Party and Persuasion (for this would be to fall back into your old Prejudice again) but by a free and indifferent recourse to the Writers and Leaders of both Sides, by considering and weighing what is offered by the

learned and excellent Defenders of the Church, as well as what is said by the Advocates for the Separation, and by trying and judging all according to the infallible Rule of Scripture, and the *Eternal Truth* of God shining forth in your own Souls. And if,

*Thirdly*, After your most impartial and sincere Endeavours rightly to inform your selves according to the best use of your Faculties and Opportunities, it be still your unhappiness verily to be perswaded in your Consciences, that the Communion of the Church of *England* is unlawful (which though I cannot deny to be absolutely possible, seems yet as hard to me for a considerate Man really to believe, as to believe *Transubstantiation*) yet I say, if you should be invincibly determin'd to such a Perswasion, in the Name of God abide where you are, and make use of the Toleration, and enjoy the Benefit of it with Peace and Satisfaction of Mind. I would not for a World perswade you to Communicate with the Church of *England* (as excellent as she is) against the real Sense and Perswasion of your Consciences. For the following of which you can never be accountable, provided it be not your *fault* that you are of that Perswasion. But if,

*Fourthly and Lastly*, You are Convinced of the Lawfulness of holding Communion with the Church; (and to be free with you, I cannot but think that most of you are, if you would confess the truth;) then I pray consider seriously with your selves what tolerable Account you will be able to render either to God or Man for continuing a Separation in that Church where even according to your own Judgment and Confession  
you

you might lawfully Communicate. Or how you can be said to preserve the Unity of the *Catholick Church*, or that *Communion of Saints* which you profess to believe, if you separate from the Communion of a Visible, Established, National Church, of whose Lawfulness you are satisfied, and from whom therefore you need not separate. Consider whether this be not a Causeless dividing, disuniting, and dismembring of the Body of Christ, a high Violation of that Publick Order and Decency which he has required in his Church, and as great a Breach of the *Christian Peace*, as you can possibly be guilty of in the Peace of the *State*: In one word, consider whether this be not all that which both Scripture and the best Antiquity represent, and so severely condemn under that one Emphatical word, *Schism*.

And do not think to salve all at last, by taking Sanctuary in the *Toleration*. This, you see, stands Neuter, leaves the State of the Question as it found it; and does not at all interpose for your relief, but leaves you to stand or fall by the *Absolute Merits* of your Cause.

These therefore alone you ought to consider and enquire into, *viz.* Whether you can honestly and safely Communicate with us or no? And if you find you *can*, then 'tis most certain that you *ought*. The Law of God and the Law of Man (for the Toleration you see evacuates neither) do still oblige you to it; and if you do not, though the Government excuses you from the *Penalty*, yet neither that nor any thing else will excuse you from the *Sin* of Schism. The short is, that which will justify such a Separation as this, will justify *any*, and then there will be no such thing as an

Obligation to Church-Unity, and consequently no such thing as Schism in the World. And I desire never to reduce an Adversary to a greater Extremity than when he is forced to deny the very *Being* and *Possibility* of the Sin of Schism, that he may prove himself to be no *Schismatick*.

This, Sir, is all I think necessary to say upon this Occasion; and I think I have said nothing but what I have well thought and considered, and what is my real Judgment, and what will stand the Test, whether of *Charity* or of *Truth*. I have viewed and reviewed what I have written; and I must needs declare, that I cannot discern the least flaw in the Argument of this Discourse, nor do I fear the Severity of the most Critical Eye or Hand. However, if any one of the Learned among the Dissenting Party thinks the Argument of this Discourse may be Answered, and withall thinks himself sufficiently qualified for the Undertaking, (for I declare beforehand that I shall not think my self concerned to take notice of every impertinent Scribler,) I fairly and freely invite him to it; and withall do promise him, for his better encouragement, that he shall find me either *Able to Defend* what I have written, or *Willing to Submit*.

*Farewell.*

POST.

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# POSTSCRIPT

Concerning

## Moderation.

I Think it very proper and seasonable, in a word or two, to rectifie another very Popular Mistake, wherewith I find most Common Persons, and some others are imposed upon. It is concerning *Moderation*, whose Notion I perceive to be generally as much abused as that of *Toleration*, and to as ill a purpose.

*Moderation*, without question if rightly understood, is a most excellent thing, as signifying,

I. In general, such a temper of Soul, and such a government of all a Mans Thoughts and Desires, Words and Actions, as may steer the course of Life in the middle way between the Extreame of Defect and Excess, so as to be always affected in Proportion to the Greatness or Goodness of the End, and to the Necessity or Usefulness of the Means.

Or as signifying more particularly with relation to the *Body*, such a due and well proportioned conduct of it, and regard to it, as becomes a Creature that is neither a meer Animal, nor a pure Spirit, but partakes of both Natures, and



therefore ought not so to be addicted to the interest of the Body, as to neglect the Spiritual Life; nor yet so devoted to the Life of the Spirit, as to forget he is in the Body. This way being as much too *High*, as the other is too *Low*, and the way of Man lying in the *Middle*.

Thus understood, without all doubt *Moderation* is a most excellent thing, and will have an universal and uncontested Approbation. And thus it is generally understood in all other Cases, but only when it relates to *Church-Conformity*. And then by *Moderation* is usually meant either an Indifferency of doing what the Church prescribes, or a doing it by Halves, or a total Omission of it.

And accordingly he is accounted a Moderate Man, who either is indifferently affected to the Constitutions of the Church, and is little concern'd whether he Conforms to them or no, and accordingly stands ready and disposed with or without reasonable Occasion to admit of Alterations, or who Conforms by halves, or who does not Conform at all.

All these in their several orders and degrees, go commonly for Men of *Moderation*; and I believe many for the procurement of that specious Title, are tempted to appear so disposed, designing nothing at all worse by it, than only the Reputation of *Moderate Men*.

But let such as run away with this Notion, take this Consideration along with them, if they are not in too much haste, That 'tis not all manner of Moderation that is justly to be commended, nor this of theirs in particular. For the right Estimation of which matter, I desire the following measures may be considered.

If the Object of our Moderation be not already either by *Nature* or *Constitution* fixed and stated in a due measure, but is to receive its measure from our Moderation, then Moderation, as it signifies an indifferency of Mind, may have both Place and Commendation. As suppose in the instance of *Pleasure*, which because an indeterminate Object, and of indefinite Latitude, capable either of Excess or Defect, leaves room for the Exercise of Moderation in us, which is then a good and laudable thing.

But if the Object be already either by *Nature*, or by *positive Constitution* fixed and stated in a due measure, and is not to receive that measure from our Moderation, then our Moderation has neither Place nor Commendation: As in the Instance suppose of *Virtue*; which being already supposed to be in the Mean, leaves no room for Moderation in us, nor would Moderation then be a good or laudable thing. Nor was it ever thought a Commendation of the love of Vertue to say it was *Moderate* or *Indifferent*.

Now to apply this to the present Case. If the Order of the *Church of England* were not already constituted in a state and temper of Moderation, then indeed Moderation in Conformity might pretend to some Excellency and Commendation; but if it be already in such a state and temper, then there is neither Room for it, nor Excellency in it. But rather on the contrary, to be moderately affected to Conformity, will then be as great a Commendation as to be a moderate Lover of Order and Reason, and all that's good. And they that like this Commendation, 'tis fit they should have it,

Before

Before therefore *Moderation* in Conformity be made a commendable Character, and before Men of this Character be so much cried up and sought after as the fittest Persons to be employ'd both in State and in Church concerns, it ought to be made appear, that the Constitution of the Church is in it self *Immoderate*.

This indeed is sily and indirectly insinuated by all those that raise such Clamors about *Moderation*. But they ought, if they would deal fairly, directly to prove it; and indeed wholly to insist upon it, and not impose upon the *Prejudice* and the *Ignorance* of the People by the specious and plausible Name of *Moderation*. For unless it be first proved, that the Church in her Constitution is *Immoderate*, 'tis plain, that *Moderation* on our parts has no room; and that all the Noise and Stir that is made about it, is but meer *Sophistry* with ill *Design*.

But now whether the Constitution of the Church be really *Immoderate*, I refer those that desire to be satisfied to what has been from time to time written in her Defence and Justification, particularly to an excellent Book very Honestly, and, as I think, very Learnedly written by Doctor *Puller*, called, *The Moderation of the Church of England*.

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# TREATISES

Concerning the

## Divine Light.

THE FIRST,

Being an Answer to a Letter of a Learned Quaker, which he is pleased to call, *A Just Reprehension to John Norris for his Unjust Reflections on the Quakers, in his Book Entitled, Reflections upon the Conduct of Human Life, &c.*

THE SECOND,

Being a Discourse concerning the Grossness of the Quakers Notion of the *Light within*, with their Confusion and Inconsistency in Explaining it.

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TO THE  
READER.

**T**Hough I have not professedly undertaken in the Two following Treatises to give an express and full Account of the Divine Light, but only so far as I have occasion to do it in dealing with my Adversary, yet (if my Judgment may be taken concerning my own work,) I think that even this Occasional Account that occurs up and down in these Papers, may be so considerable as to give them a fair Right to the Title of Treatises concerning the Divine Light. And though the direct and professed business of the former of these Treatises be only a Private and Personal Ingagement between me and  
my

## Advertisement to the Reader.

my Opposer, yet that it has been the occasion of my delivering many great and considerable things, as well Absolutely as Relatively considered, and such as if read carefully and judiciously, and with a thoroughly Awakened Attention, may contribute very much to the clearing of many useful Truths, and to the Improvement of the Reader in several curious Points of Speculation.

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*An Answer to a Letter of a Learned Quaker, which he calls, A just Reprehension to John Noris of Newton St. Loe, for his unjust Reflection on the Quakers, in his Book Entitled, Reflections upon the Conduct of Human Life, &c.*

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*By the Author of those Reflections.*

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THOUGH I do not think it any great piece of Ignorance or Defect of Learning, not to be rightly acquainted with the Quaker's Principles, which if I knew them never so well, would add but little either to my Knowledge, or to my Opinion of it; yet I am withal so sensible of that Right, which even the meanest Persons and Parties have to Justice and Fair Dealing, that I think I should not be able to justify my *misrepresenting* those Principles, of which I might be very excusably *Ignorant*.

And since this is the thing laid to my Charge, and that with a great deal of Passion and angry Resentment, not to say Rudeness and Incivility, I think I may be allowed to be so far concerned at the *Indictment*, as to endeavour to acquit my self of it; not so much for the Honour of my *Judgment* (which I do not conceive at present to lie much at stake) as for the Justification of my  
*Sin-*



*Sincerity*: Which though I so peculiarly value, that I might be allowed to be a little warm in the Vindication of it, especially coming after such a provoking and affronting Adversary, yet I hope I shall be able so to temper my Spirit and govern my Pen, that the *Defence* shall not be near so passionate as the *Charge*.

I confess indeed, I did not expect any great Civility of Address from a Man of this fullen Tribe, whose visible Mark and Character is *Rusticity*, and who are generally at as great Distance with all Courtliness of *Style*, as of *Behaviour*. But yet I thought that the *Gentleman* and the *Scholar* (for such it seems is the Quality of my Adversary) might so far ballance and over-rule the *Quaker*, as to contain him within the Limits of Ordinary Decency, and keep him on this side Rudeness and Scurrility. To be blunt and downright is one thing, but to be rude and abusive is another. And however I might expect the former from him, and excuse in him as a *Quaker*, yet of the latter I thought he would not be guilty as a *Gentleman*. Indeed the least that I could expect from a Person of Mr. *Vickris* his Education and Quality, was, that he would not be uncivil, especially in his first Onset, and writing to a Person that was a Stranger to him; and who, though he does not look upon himself to be so great as to be above Contradiction, may yet justly think himself considerable enough to expect and deserve fair and civil Language. But instead of this he falls foul upon me, after such a rude, violent and passionate manner, as is below the Breeding even of a *Water-man*, and such as a Man of any Temper would be ashamed to be guilty

guilty of, even in the sudden Heats of common Discourse. Which may tempt some unlucky Fancies to imagin, that he has exchanged his Cold quaking Fit for an *Hot* one, and that the *Light* within is turned into a *Flame*.

I cannot in Justice deny, but that for a Man of his Way, my Adversary is pretty considerable for his Sense and Learning, (notwithstanding that he endeavours to represent me as a Dunce and Blockhead as well as a Knave) and I believe he would have shewn more of each, and with better Advantage, if the Violence of his Passion had not disturbed the Clearness and Order of his Thoughts, and put him often out of his Guard. For Passion is the great Contrariety to Reason, and will draw a Cloud over the brightest Mind. The quiet and sedate Soul is most fit for the Contemplation of Truth, as the calmest Weather is commonly the most serene. If *Love* be blind, *Anger* I am sure is much more so; and there is this remarkable difference between then Wars of the *Pen* and those of the *Sword*, that tho the Soldier may fight to most Advantage in *Hot* Blood, the Disputant will reason best in *Cold*.

But lest I should appear guilty of a false Charge in this respect, as he says I am in some others, and be thought to misrepresent the *Temper* and Behaviour of my Adversary, as he says I do his *Principles*, I think it necessary for my own Security, to give the Reader some Account of the Passion, Rudeness and Abusiveness of this Aggressor, before I proceed to consider the Argument of his Paper.

And here (to pass by the Roughness and the Magisterial Ayre of the Title Page, where at first

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Dash

Does he assume the Office of a Cenſor, and undertake to *Reprehend*, taxing me with no leſs than *False Representation*, *Confuſion* and *Self-Contradiſtion*, which I think might be more properly left to the Judgment of the Reader, or bring up the Arrear, than be placed in the Front of the Book) I appeal for the Truth of this Charge to the following Paſſages.

*When firſt* (ſays he, pag. 3.) *I peruſed thy Reflections upon the Conduct of Human Life, &c. I was, and ſtill am pleaſed with all that tends to the Propagation of Original and Neceſſary Truth, with joyce where I find it ſpring from an upright Mind, pure Intention, and clean Veſſel.* What Reaſon has he to queſtion or prejudge the Uprightneſs of my Mind, or the Purity of my Intention, or the Cleanneneſs of my Veſſel? Either this is very impertinently, or very uncharitably ſuggeſted. Either he means nothing by it, or he means ill. And that he does ſo, he has taken Care to ſatisfie the Reader, by explaining himſelf more fully in the very next Words, *For whoſo* (ſays he) *undertakes to reprehend the Intelligible Conduct of Human Life, ought firſt to purge himſelf from the Irregularities of his Moral Conduct, which does Cloud and darken his Underſtanding.* What a ſcurvy malicious Inſinuation is this! For tho' the Words abſtractly conſidered be a Propoſition of Universal Truth, and may bear an innocent and inoffenſive Senſe, yet conſidered with their *Occaſion*, and with their *Application* to me, if they ſignifie any thing they muſt ſignifie ill; there muſt be either an intolerable Impertinence in them, or a great deal of Malice and Cenſoriousneſs. For does he not by this plainly inſinuate

to the World that I am an ill Man, and that there are such Irregularities in my *Moral Conduct* as make me unfit to reflect upon the *Intellectual Conduct* of Human Life? And would not any one that knew nothing of me any otherwise than by this Paper of his, and were to take his Measure of me from hence, be tempted to conclude, that I was a Man of a loose and debauch'd Conversation? Now if I deserve this Character, I have nothing to complain of; but if I do not, (and I appeal even to Mr. *Vickers* himself, nay, even to the World, whether I do or no) then this is a very uncharitable and very unchristian Insinuation.

And yet as bad as it is, he has more of the same; and that notwithstanding what he says of himself in the Paragraph immediately following, that he is *far from a Spirit of Detraction*. Which Passage I think should either have been left out, or set at a greater distance from the foregoing one, wherein, there seems to be so strong a Savour of that Spirit. As there does in what follows, when (p. 4.) He charges me with despising the Testimony of God through the Meanness of the Instruments: Applying to me that of the Apostle to the *Thessalonians*, chap. 4. v. 8. *He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not Man but God, who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit*. Which Allegation I shall allow to be pertinent, when he has proved those Instruments he talks of to be equally inspired with the Apostles: But till then he must give me leave to think and call it a Blasphemous piece of Arrogance. For it can be no less to make Despising the Quakers the same with despising God, unless it be proved that the Quakers are Divinely inspired.

spired. When I see this done, I shall allow of the Expression: In the mean while I must beg Mr. *Vickris* not to be angry, if I tell him that it puts me in mind of a Story I have heard of a Quaker in *Oxford*, who when some of the young Scholars for some Rudenesses and Disturbances he had been guilty of in the Colledge, had brought him to the Pump to pump him, while he was doing his Penance, impudently cried out, *Pump on, Pump on, you Pump not me, but the Lord.* I will not say Mr. *Vickris* his Expression is exactly of a piece with this, but there is so much Resemblance between them, that as soon as I read one, I could no chuse but think of t'other.

But he goes on in his Censorious and Uncharitable Reflections; for after he had quoted (*P. 6.*) that Passage out of the Book of *Wisdom*, chap. 1. v. 4. *Into a malicious Soul Wisdom will not enter, nor dwell in the Body that is subject to Sin. For the Holy Spirit of Discipline will flee Deceit, and remove from Thoughts that are without Understanding, and will not abide when Unrighteousness cometh in. For Wisdom is a loving Spirit, and will not acquit a Blasphemer of his Words; for God is the Witness of his Reins, and a true Beholder of his Heart, and an Hearer of his Tongue. Therefore he that speaketh unrighteous things can't be hid, neither shall Vengeance when it punishes pass by him.* All which in the abundance of his Civility and Charity he has thought fit to apply to me: He proceeds to add, *Now seeing these Sayings are true and righteous, and that 'tis possible to profess this Doctrine of the Divine Word, Light, Grace, Spirit of Wisdom and Truth, and the teachings of it, and yet not possess it, nor be learned of it, nor led by it, but whilst preaching of it to others*

*to be a Cast-away: I advise thee to consider in what Ground and Nature thou yet standest and livest in, and what Spirit lives and rules in thee.* I thank him for his Advice, but not for that spiteful and strangely censorious Insinuation that goes along with it, which amounts to no less, than that I am one of those malicious Souls into which Wisdom will not enter; that I am deceitful, without Understanding, unrighteous, and a Blasphemer: That tho I profess the Doctrin of the Divine Light, yet I do not possess it, nor am led by it, but while I preach it to others, am my self a Cast-away; which I think is as bad as one Man can well say of another, and yet 'tis what he plainly insinuates, if there be any Connection or Pertinence in what he says.

But fearing he had not been yet plain enough, and lest the too candid Reader should miss his Meaning, he proceeds, *Hath not Unrighteousness entered in through Self-love and Esteem, which blinds the Eye, and causes the Tongue to speak unrighteous things?* Here he charges me with Unrighteousness, Ambition and Self-love; which last he is pleased to heighten to such an extravagant pitch, as to make me an Idolater, and that of the worst sort, as making my self to be my God. For says he, *Is not Self exalted to sit in the Temple of God, as God in thee?* What a Flight of Censoriousness and Uncharity is this! For besides the Heinousness of the Charge, (it being as bad as can be said of the Devil himself, that he makes Self his God, there being nothing so opposite to Charity which refers all to God, as Self-love, which refers all to its self) I say, besides the Heinousness of the Charge, 'tis also of such a particular Nature, as

were I indeed guilty of it, it would be impossible for any Man, much more for Mr. *Vickris*, who is a meer Stranger to me, without a Divine Revelation ever to know. For Self-love is a Vice of the Heart, and one of the most latent and retired of all the Vices that are lodged there, and consequently obnoxious to his Judgment only who is a Discerner of the Heart, to whom all Hearts be open, all Desires known, and from whom no Secret is hid. God alone can tell how far *Self* is exalted either in me, or in any Man else: And therefore Mr. *Vickris* had much better have left me to His Judgment, than to sit in Judgment upon me himielf, and pass so severe a Sentence in a Cause that does not, cannot fall within his Cognizance.

Nor is he satisfied with representing me as an ill *Man*, but he must also find fault with me for being a *Scholar*. *Art thou not decking thy self with thy corrupt Wisdom,* (says he) *which is the forbidden Fruit, and will prove Folly in the end?* By which I suppose he must mean Philosophy, and the Study of Arts and Sciences, which he will needs have to be corrupt Wisdom, and the Forbidden Fruit. Now tho I not only grant, but in a Treatise purposely written upon this Subject, have expressly contended, and if I mistake not, fully demonstrated, that considering the present State of Man, the Study of Learning and Knowledge is no farther allowable, than as 'tis conducive to the moralizing of his Life, and that all Prosecution of it beyond or beside this End, is an immoderate and blameable Curiosity; yet I hope as far as it is apt to serve the Interest of a good Life, there is no reason to disallow or condemn it. Tho it be not to be allow'd any farther, yet

I think

I think it may and must be allowed so far. And herein I think I state the measure of prosecuting Learning and Knowledge in a due *mean*, between the Extreame of those over-inquisitive Spirits on the one hand, who set no Limits to their Curiosity, and those narrow and contracted ones on the other who confine it too straitly, condemning all Human Learning in gross, under the reproachful Appellations of *Carnal Reason*, *Corrupt Wisdom*, *Vain Philosophy*, and the like; under which Characters I think it ought not to be represented, as far as it is apt to serve and minister to the Interest of Religion and a good Life. And that it may be serviceable to that purpose, I might undertake to shew, but that the excellent Mr. Boyle has saved me the trouble in a late Treatise upon this very Subject, call'd, *The Christian Virtuoso*. I cannot therefore but wonder what should make Mr. *Vickris* (who is himself a Scholar) thus condemn all Human Learning in gross, under the Name of *Corrupt Wisdom*, and blame me for *decking* my self with it, especially considering that a little after (*Page 10.*) he supposes the Divine Light to assist the Natural Faculties of the Soul in the Attainment of Arts and Sciences: Why then does he tell me of decking my self with my *Corrupt Wisdom*? What, does the Divine Light assist the Natural Faculties of the Soul in the Attainment of *Corrupt Wisdom*, and such as will prove Folly in the end? Can that Wisdom be corrupt, which is taught us by the Assistance of the Divine Light? Or is that Light to be esteemed Divine, whose Instructions are so corrupt? How are these things consistent, unless Mr. *Vickris* will be understood



not of condemning Human Learning in general as Corrupt, but only that which is the Object of my particular Study ; as if my Studies were not directed to the ends of a good Life, which would be as a great a *Censure*, as the other is a *Contradiction*. So that in short, he is necessarily reduced to this *Dilemma*, Either he condemns Human Learning in gross, as corrupt, and then he *contradicts himself*, in making the Divine Light assistant to it ; or he condemns the particular matter of my Study as corrupt, and then he *Censures me*.

As he does again most unpardonably, (Page 7.) telling me, that *I wilfully blast the Fame of Gods Name and Work in the Earth, in and by his People, because they agree not with Mans Ways and Conceited wise Notions*. Which is a Charge next to that of committing the Sin against the holy Ghost. For does Mr. *Vickris* consider what it is wilfully to blast the Fame of God's Name and Work ? Or does he consider how intimately acquainted a Man had need be with another Man's *Intérieur*, to be able to pronounce what degrees of *Wilfulness* there are in his *Overt Acts* ? Does he well consider this ? The best Apology I can make for him, is to say, that he does not. And yet as if he had said nothing amiss, but were secure of the Truth of his Charge, he wipes his Mouth, and very gravely applies to me two of the most severe Texts of Scripture that he could pick out in all the Bible, namely, the 12th Verse of the 2d of *Peter* the 2d, and the 10th Verse of the Epistle of *St. Jude*, which though through a guilty Modesty he would not speak out, I shall. The Words are, *But these, as natural Brute Beasts,*

made

made to be taken and destroy'd, speak evil of the things that they understand not, and shall utterly perish in their own Corruption. And again, But these speak evil of those things which they know not; but what they know naturally as Brute Beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. Upon my Word very civilly, and very charitably applied: But there are some Men, who though they revile those they dis-affect never so bitterly, so it be done with the Solemnity of a Text, and in Scripture Phrase, think they charge in *Armour*, and have a Warrant for their most abusive Scurrility. And so having poured out the Dregs of his Venom, he concludes this Reprehension-Part, having (as he words it) discharged himself to me on the aforementioned occasion. I think he might very properly say, *He has discharged himself*, having thrown up such a deal of Choler and other Filth. Indeed (Poor Man) his Stomach was very Foul, and 'twas high time to have it clear'd. And yet 'tis not all up yet; he has not yet so fully *discharg'd* himself, but that we find him *Reaching* again toward the End of the Book. For after he had pass'd a disingenuous Reflection upon my Reason and Conscience, in wishing they were both reform'd, (which implies, that at present they are both very corrupt) and after he had charg'd me with no less than *Evil Presumption* and *Blasphemy* against some that dwell in Heaven, and *Prophaneness* into the Bargain, in the Extravagance of his Zeal and Passion he cries out, *What art thou, O Man, that boastest thy self? Art thou wiser than thy Maker?* Threatning me withal in the Style, and with the Authority of a Prophet, that God shall confound my Wisdom, and bring to nought my Under-  
standing

Pag. 13.

Pag. 15.

standing wherein it is exalted ; for he hath determin'd to stain the Pride of all Flesh, the Mouth of the Lord hath spoken it : Taking for granted that my Understanding is exalted beyond its due limits, & that I abound with Pride. Which indeed are all of them fine Censures, considering the illness of the things suggested, and the little Knowledge Mr. *Vickers* has of me ; upon whom he is pleased to bestow one stroke of Civility more at parting, telling me, *This is written for the clearing of Truth's Testimony from the Rubbish thou hast cast thereon.* What a rude uneducated Pen does the Gentleman write with ! Whether it be his Anger, or his ill Nature, or his Perswasion, that so uncivilizes him, I will not stay to examin ; but upon the whole matter, I think he has given me no small occasion to suspect that this was written, not so much for the *Clearing of Truth* as for the clearing, that is, the *discharging* himself, and the ridding his Stomach of an uneasie Load, which now he is discharg'd of, I hope he will sleep in quiet.

And thus having given the World a View of some of the Rudenesses of this Author, (for in mercy to the Reader as well as to my Adversary, I have not set down all) I now dare appeal to the same Judge, whether such foul reflecting Expressions as these become either the Breeding of a Gentleman, or the Charity of a Christian, or the Pretensions of a Quaker. I say, the Pretensions of a *Quaker* ; for tho the Quakers do not pretend to the External Civilities either of Language or Behaviour, but rather seem to distinguish themselves by an opposite Rusticity in each, yet 'tis well known that they make high Pretensions

tensions to *Charity*, particularly to that most Christian part of it that consists in *Meekness* and *Gentleness*, in *Patience* and *Long-suffering*, in a quiet and passive temper of Spirit. To these (as 'tis well known) their Pretensions run so high, as to offer to turn the other Cheek to the Smiter; nay, even to scruple the Lawfulness of *War*, which it seems is too rough a thing for such calm and inoffensive Creatures as they, all made up of Love and Sweetness.

But now let any but a Quaker judge how well Mr. *Vickers* has maintain'd this Character. Had I been never so gross in misrepresenting the Quakers Principle, I could not have deserv'd such a Barbarous Treatment from him; or if I had, yet it would not have been consistent with his so highly Christian Pretensions to give it me. No, he should have suffer'd rather, and have return'd Good for Evil. At least he should have had so much regard to their so greatly pretended Principle of *Meekness*, as not to suffer himself to run into such Intemperances of Passion and Language, as he appears now to be guilty of. Is this the *Charity*, is this the *Meekness* of a Quaker? If it be, then *Sit Anima mea*, Let my Soul be with the Philosophers, shall I say? Or with the *Men of the World*; or indeed with any Men, rather than with such a bitter soul mouth'd Sect as this. What the Temper of this Gentleman is in his Conversation I know not, but if he governs his Tongue no better than he does his Pen, (and 'tis strange if he should) I think 'twould be a Blessing both to himself and others, if he were *Speechless*. For the Language of the latter is so very foul, that I believe the Arch-Angel in his

Dispute

Dispute with the Devil about the Body of *Moses*, did not only use better to him, (which would be but a small matter) but receiv'd better from him. I'm sure he could not well receive worse. And now we are upon Scripture-Allusion, I shall beg leave to offer one Text to Mr. *Vickris* his Consideration, in requital to those many severe ones he has set before mine. This Gentleman is both by his Principles and by his express Declaration in this Paper, a great Despiser of that Wisdom which is from below (otherwise by him call'd corrupt Wisdom) and a great Pretender to that Wisdom which is from above; let him hear then and consider what St. *James* says, *The Wisdom*  
 Jam. 3.17. *that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, &c.* With which I conclude this part, and so pass on from the *Passion* to the *Argument* that is contain'd in this Paper.

And here, if there be any Dependence upon that Saying, that *Strong Passions produce weak Arguments*, I may hence take a Presage of a Successful Issue in the present Engagement. But however for fear of the worst, I think it necessary here in the Entrance to advertise the Reader, that the Question now in Debate between us, is not concerning the Truth of the Quakers Principles, but concerning the Truth of my Representation of them; not whether their Principles are true in themselves, but whether they are truly represented by me. So that if Mr. *Vickris* should have the Fortune to win the Stake, it would only be a private personal Victory, without any advantage to the *Cause* of *Quakerism*, which is not concern'd in the Issue of this Dispute.

This being premised, I must further acquaint the Reader, that the Book which Mr. *Vickris* expects against, as guilty of misreporting their Principles, is my *Reflections upon the Conduct of Humane Life*, particularly in the Post-script added to the Second Edition, where I undertake to give some Account of the difference between my Notion of the Divine Light, and the Quakers Light within. And this I do in several Articles distinctly, which because of the frequent recourse that we shall have to them in the Sequel, it will be a Satisfaction to have here set down. They are therefore as follow:

I. The Quakers usually talk of this Light within as of some Divine *Communication* or Manifestation only, whereas I make it to be the very *Essence* and *Substance* of the Deity, which I suppose virtually to contain all things in it, and to be intimately united to our Minds.

II. The Quakers represent this Light within as a sort of *Extraordinary Inspiration* (whence they have the Name of *Enthusiasts*) whereas I suppose it to be a Man's *Natural* and *Ordinary* way of Understanding.

III. The Quakers (if I mistake not) confine their Light within to some certain Objects, namely, Moral and Spiritual Truths, in order only to the direction of Practice, and accordingly make it a Supplement to *Scripture*, which they say is not sufficient without it, nor indeed any more than a meer *Dead Letter*. But now I do not appropriate this Divine Light to Moral or Spiritual things, but extend it as far as all Truth; yea, as far as all that is Intelligible, which I suppose to be perceiv'd and understood in this Divine Light, as I have explain'd it.

IV.

IV. The Quakers make their Light within a special Priviledge of a certain order of Men, their own Party. Not indeed as to the Possibility, because they suppose all Men to be indifferently capable of this Divine Illumination, as may appear from their contending against Predestination, and for Universal Grace. But tho' they do not make it a special Priviledge as to the Possibility, yet they do as to the *Act*, making none but those of their own Way to be actually enlightened by it. Whereas according to my Principles this is no special Priviledge, but the common and universal Benefit of all Men; yea, of all the intelligent Creation, who all see and understand in this Light of God, without which there would be neither *Truth* nor *Understanding*.

V. The Quakers by their Light within understand some determinate *form'd* Dictate or Proposition, expresly and positively directing and instructing them to do so or so. Whereas my Light is only the *Essential* Truth of God, which indeed is always present to my Understanding, as being intimately united with it, but does not formally enlighten or instruct me, but when I attend to it, and consult it, and read what is written in those Divine Ideal Characters.

VI. And Lastly, The Quakers do not offer any rational or intelligible Account of their Light within, neither as to the thing, nor as to the mode of it, but only *Cant* in some loose general Expressions about the *Light*, which they confirm with the Authority of St. *John's* Gospel, though they understand neither one nor t'other. Whereas I have offer'd a Natural, Distinct and Philosophical way of explaining both, namely, by the

Omniiformity of the Ideal World, or the Divine  
*Logos*, who has in himself the Essences and Idea's  
 of all things, and in whom the same are perceiv'd  
 by us and by all Creatures.

Now this Mr. *Vickris* is pleased to censure as  
 a Misrepresentation of the Quaker's Principle  
 concerning the Light within. But before I pro-  
 ceed to consider whether it be or no, there are  
 two intermedial Passages of his that expect to be  
 taken notice of. I had said in my Reflections,  
 pag. 77. speaking of the Light within as unto-  
 wardly represented by the Quakers, that the  
 thing in it self rightly understood is true, and if  
 any such shall yet call it Quakerism or Enthusiasm,  
 that 'tis such Quakerism as makes a good part of  
 St. *John's* Gospel, and of St. *Austin's* Works.  
 And so again to the like purpose in my Postscript,  
 that if the Quakers understood their own Noti-  
 on, and knew how to explain it, and into what  
 Principles to resolve it, it would not much differ  
 from mine: Of which two Passages Mr. *Vickris*  
 endeavours to make a notable Advantage, and  
 fancies that they mightily befriend the Cause of  
 Quakerism, as *implying a sort of Confession to their* Pag. 7.  
*Principle*, and that the Difference between us  
 would only be *in Terminis*. But is the Man in  
 good earnest? Or does he think that he writes to  
 one that understands not what belongs to Con-  
 sequence, and will be imposed upon by any thing?  
 Does it therefore follow that I confess the Truth  
 of the Quakers Principle of the Light, because I  
 allow the Notion in its self to be true when right-  
 ly understood, that is, when taken in a right  
 Sense? What, does the General Truth of any  
 Notion rightly stated infer the Truth of this or  
 that



that particular way of explaining it? May there not be a false and erroneous Explication of a true *Hypothesis*? Suppose I should say that the Doctrin of *Justification by Faith only* is a true Notion rightly understood, do I thereby confess the Truth of the *Solifidian* way of understanding it, who so explain our being justified by Faith only, as to exclude the concurrence of Obedience? Or, Suppose I should say that the Doctrin of *Pleasures being our supream Good* is a true Doctrin rightly understood, do I thereby acknowledge it to be true in that Sense of the Proposition usually attributed to *Epicurus*? Or (to put these two instances together) can I justly be supposed to imply that the *Solifidian* and the *Epicurean* differ from their respective Adversaries only in *Terminis*, because I acknowledge that the Notions in themselves rightly understood are true? If Mr. *Vickris* had but been at the pains to deck himself with a little more of that *Corrupt Wisdom*, call'd *Logick*, he would never have imposed upon himself, nor have offer'd to impose upon me with such Womanish Consequences as these.

Pag. 8.

The other Passage that I must take in my way, is his general Complaint against me, for not quoting the Quakers own Words and Authors in representing their Principle. Now to this I answer, that having in my time read several of the most considerable of the Quakers Books, and (as I thought) well enough comprehended them as far they were *intelligible*, I thought I might trust my Memory so far, as to venture to represent their Sense as to one (and that the most remarkable) of their Principles, without ransaking their Books, and mustering up their Quotations, which

which at that time I could not very well do neither, having but few of them by me. But neither should I have thought it necessary if I had had never so many. For sure a Man may venture to give an Account of one Notorious Principle belonging to a certain Perswasion, and to shew the difference between that and another, upon the Stock of his former Reading, without being obliged to bring an Author to attest to every thing he says. Thus were I to state the general Difference between the *Cartesian* and the *Aristotelian* Philosophy, might I not securely place it in this, that the one offers to explain *Appearances* of Nature by *Forms* and *Qualities*, and other such abstract Beings, which the other chuses to resolve into the more simple and intelligible Principles of *Figure* and *Motion*, &c. without appealing presently either to the Text of *Aristotle*, or to the Principles of *Descartes*? Or suppose I was askt the Difference between a *Socinian* and a *Mahumetan*, might I not be allow'd to say, that tho the *Socinian* denies the Divinity of Christ as well as the *Mahumetan*, and the *Mahumetan* owns him as a true Prophet as well as the *Socinian*, yet they differ in this, that whereas the *Mahumetan* allows him to have been only a Temporary Prophet, and that his Religion is now superannuated, as having had its Time; the *Socinian* acknowledges him to be a Prophet of a perpetual Authority, and that his Religion is ever obliging, as being the last and standing Revelation of God: I say, might I not be allowed to state the difference thus between them *without Book*, but I must needs be put upon fetching Proofs, Chapter and Verse, out of *Socinus* and the *Alcoran*? Mr.

*Vickris* might therefore well have spared this Objection, without any prejudice either to the Beauty, or to the Strength of his Discourse; especially considering, that he himself is not pleased to bring so much as one single Citation out of any one Quakerish Writer, (for that Passage of Barclay's (pag. 5.) is quoted upon another occasion) to disprove the Representation of their Principle given by me. Now Mr. *Vickris* was much more concern'd to alledge Testimonies out of Authors than I, as undertaking to shew that Representation of mine to be false, which I was then contented barely to *propose*, not to *prove*. For tho it was possible for me to give an Account (and that a right one too) of the Quakers Principle, without producing any of their Testimonies, yet it was not possible for Mr. *Vickris* to prove that Account of mine to be false, without referring to their Books. Because 'tis one thing barely to *propose*, which was my Undertaking, and another thing to *prove*, which was his. Since therefore Mr. *Vickris* thought fit to save himself the Trouble of appealing to Authors when more concerned to do so, he might well forgive it me, the only thing material in this business being, not whether I quote their Books or no, but whether I have given a true Account of their Principle, which is the thing that now comes to be examined.

And here that Mr. *Vickris* may not have the least Ground to suspect or pretend that I contrive things to my own Advantage, by picking and chusing what I can best Answer, or that I misrepresent his Arguments, by reporting them in my own Words, or that I omit or conceal any part of their Strength, I will deal so fairly and square-

ly with him, as to set down at large his Exceptions against every one of the foremention'd Articles, applying to them their respective Answers distinctly.

*Exception against the First Article.*

I. THOU say'st, the Quakers usually talk of this Light within, as of some Divine Communication and Manifestation only. How does this appear to be true? Thou quotest no Author for it. I apprehend thou intendest hereby, or else thy Assertion has little weight or matter in it, viz. That the Quakers own the Light within to be an Accident, and not a substantial inherent Principle of Divine Excellency; which is a great Mistake, and 'tis to be fear'd a wilfull one too, seeing 'tis generally known, and thou confessest it too, that they quote the Testimony of *John* the Evangelist for their Principle, as thou hast done for thine, they believing according thereunto, *Chap. 1. v. 4. In him was Life, and the Life was the Light of Men*: And if the Life of the Word be the Light of Men, then surely the Quakers cannot be supposed to believe in any thing less than a real Spiritual Substance, which the Soul of Man is capable to feel and apprehend: For all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made, *John 1. 3.* Thus thy first Distinction falls to the ground.

*The Answer.*

SUPPOSE for the present, that the Sense intended in the Assertion were what Mr. *Vickris* apprehends it (though the Antithesis or counterpart of the Article plainly implies the contrary)

trary) that the Quakers represent their Light within after the nature and manner of an *Accident*, and not as a *Substantial Principle*. I say as a *Substantial Principle*; for as for a *Substantial Inherent Principle* I know not what to make of it, it being the first time that I ever heard that *Inherency* was an Attribute belonging to Substance. Leaving out therefore by Mr. *Vickris* his Leave this ill-suited Term, which I fancy happen'd to slip in while he was taking a Nod over his Paper; suppose, I say, my Meaning were, that the Quakers represent their Light not as a *Substantial Being*, but rather as an *Accident*, how does he make out the contrary? Why, he tells me this is a great Mistake. But may I not reply to him in his own Language, *How does this appear to be true? Thou quotest no Author for it.* But tho he produces no Authority, yet he offers at an Argument, the Sum of which is this, The Quakers building upon the Authority of St. *John*, make the Life of the Word to be the Light of Men, and therefore must be supposed to make it a Substance, the Life of the Word being confessedly so. But if this be all Mr. *Vickris* has to say for his Point, he is very short of proving what he undertakes, tho at the same time what he undertakes be nothing to the purpose. For tho it be true, that both the *Word*, and the *Life* of the Word are real Substances, yet this Proposition, *The Life of the Word is the Light of Men*, considered simply in its self, without depending upon some proper and peculiar Hypothesis that shall limit and determin its signification, does not at all infer, that the Light here is a Substance. For the Word may be said to be the Light (unless a  
contrary

contrary Hypothesis oblige us to understand otherwise) *Efficiently*, as it causes our Illumination, as it enlightens and instructs by assisting the Understanding, according to the common received Notion, as well as *Formally*, by being it self the Formal and Immediate Object of our Conception. And so when Christ says of himself, *I am the Light of the World*, there is no necessity, I mean from the Words themselves, of understanding them in a *Formal* way of Predication; but the Sense may very well be, what it is generally presumed to be, that he is the Author, or *Efficient* Cause of our Illumination. Which is allow'd to be sometimes the certain and necessary Acceptation of the Particle (*is,*) whereof we have a remarkable Example, *Ephes. 2. 14. He is our Peace*, that is, the Author or Procurer of our Peace. And if these Propositions are not of themselves determin'd to a Formal Sense, but may aptly enough be taken *Efficiently* as well as *Formally*, then their grounding their Principle of the Light upon these or such like Expressions does not infer that they hold it to be a Substantial Being.

And it does not of necessity neither, though we should suppose them to understand that Proposition of St. *John* in a *Formal* Sense. Indeed in case the Word be Formally the Light of Men, it will truly follow, that the Light is a Substance, because the Word it self is so. And if the Quakers do construe the Proposition in such a Sense, that is, *Formally*, it will also follow that they ought (if they will be consistent with themselves) to make the Light to be a real Substance. But it will not follow that they actually and expressly do

so, unless it were necessary that Men should always so strictly attend to the Consequences of what they lay down, as never to say any thing inconsistent with their Principles; which is an Happiness that Men of more Logical Heads than the Quakers are generally presumed to be, would give a great deal to be secure of. So that whether the Proposition be taken Efficiently or Formally, it does by no means follow from their bare quoting those Words from St. *John* in the behalf of their Principle, (which yet is the only Argument Mr. *Vickris* is pleased to insist upon) that the Quakers do profess their Light to be a Substantial Being. I do not say they do not, but only that had that been the Sense of my Assertion, Mr. *Vickris* is far from proving the contrary by virtue of the Argument he has used.

But why must that needs be the Sense of my Assertion? Why, because otherwise, as he conceits, there will not be much weight or matter in it. No? Suppose this should be the Sense of it, (as 'tis plain from the Antithesis that it is) *That the Quakers represent their Light not as God himself, but only as a Divine Communication, that is, as something communicated or exhibited by God, whereas I make the Light to be the very Essence and Substance of the Deity, &c.* Will he say there is little Weight in this Assertion? Is not the Difference very material, if true? And that this is the natural, nay, the necessary Sense of the Article is so evident from the Antithesis, that I wonder how a Man of Mr. *Vickris* his Apprehension could miss of it. For (as he will quickly see, if he review the place with the least Attention) the Opposition between my Notion of the Divine Light, and

and that of the Quakers, is not made to consist in this, that *they* make it to be an Accident, and / a Substance ; but in this, that they represent it as something only communicated, exhibited or manifested by God, (whether as an Accident or a Substance I was not then concerned to consider) whereas in my Account it is the very Essence and Substance of the Deity, exhibitivè of all Truth, and always presential to our Mind. And therefore when 'tis said, that the Quakers usually talk of the Light within as of some Divine Communication or Manifestation only ; the Term (*only*) is not exclusive of Substance in general, but of the Divine Substance, or Essence of God. I know very well, and have no temptation to dissemble it, that 'tis the express Doctrin of the Quakers, that the Divine Light is a Substance, not an Accident. For they make it the Principle of Regeneration, which they all say, (and Mr. Keith *Way to the City of God,* has taken a great deal of Pains to prove it) is a *P. 62.* *Substantial* Life, as much as the Life of Vegetation, Sensation, or Reason is ; and as far as I can apprehend, the Notion may be sound and true enough in its self, and wants only to be fix'd upon a right Bottom. And I know that Mr. Barclay in his Apology, lately Printed in Folio with the rest of his Works, says expressly, *We understand* *Pag. 334.* *not this Seed, Light or Grace to be an Accident, as most Men ignorantly do, but a Real, Spiritual Substance, which the Soul of Man is capable to Feel and Apprehend ; from which that Real, Spiritual, Inward Birth in Believers arises, call'd the New Creature, the New Man in the Heart.*

But tho it be too plain to be denied, that the Quakers make the Light to be a real Substance,



Apology,  
P. 133.

yet 'tis also as plain, that they do not make it the very Substance of God. By this Seed, Grace and Word of God and Light, (says Mr. Barclay) wherewith we say every Man is enlightned, and hath a measure of it, which strives with them in order to save them, and which may by the Stubbornness and Wickedeness of Man's Will be quenched, bruised, wounded, pressed down, slain and crucified, we understand not the proper Essence and Nature of God precisely taken, which is not Divisible into Parts and Measures, as being a most pure simple Being, void of all Composition or Division, and therefore can neither be resisted, hurt, wounded, crucified or slain by all the Efforts and Strength of Men. But we understand a Spiritual, Heavenly and Invisible Principle, in which God as Father, Son and Spirit dwells; a measure of which Divine and glorious Life is in all men, as a Seed, which of its own Nature draws, invites and inclines to God. And this we call *Vehiculum Dei*, or the Spiritual Body of Christ, the Flesh and Blood of Christ which came down from Heaven, of which all the Saints do feed, and are thereby nourished unto eternal Life. Whether there be any such thing as this *Vehiculum Dei*, or Spiritual Body of Christ, (which is a Notion several Learned Men both before and since the appearance of Quakerism have entertained upon the reading the sixth Chapter of St. John) I have neither Cause nor Mind at present to dispute. But I think 'tis plain from this Account Mr. Barclay gives of the Light, that tho it be a Substance, ye 'tis not the same with, but really distinct from the Substance or Essence of God. For it is not *Deus*, but *Vehiculum Dei*. And to the like purpose Mr. Keith, another of their most considerable Writers, speaking of the Seed of

of God, (which is the same with the Light now in Question) says, that it is not the Godhead it self, but way to the a certain middle Nature, Substance or Being, betwixt City of God, the Godhead and Mankind, &c. Again, says he, P. 130.

p. 131. *This middle Nature I call a Divine Substance or Essence, not as if it were the Godhead it self, or a Particle or Portion of it, but because of its excellency above all other things next unto the Godhead, as on such an Account Men do call other things Divine which are very excellent, &c.* Again, says he in the next Paragraph, *This excellent and intermediate Being may be call'd the Divine Being, because the Godhead is most immediately manifest therein, and dwelleth in it, as in the most Holy Place, or Holy of Holies.* More Testimonies I might, but I think need not add, it being sufficiently clear from these cited out of Mr. Barclay and Mr. Keith, that the Quakers do not hold their Light to be the very Substance and Essence of the Deity, though at the same time I think they ought, and that they are inconsistent with themselves in that they do not. For that Text of St. John, *In him was Life, and the Life was the Light of Men*, which they quote to prove the Light to be a Substantial Principle, does not prove so much as that, unless the Proposition be understood *Formally*; and if it be, then it proves a great deal more, viz. That 'tis not only a Substance, (which is all they infer from it) but also a Divine Substance strictly speaking, even the very Essence of the Deity. And indeed what less than that can be a Light to the Soul? How can any thing that is not God, or that is created, be so? But 'tis not my present Business to consider what the Quakers ought to say, but what they do say. 'Tis plain, that they do

do not make the Divine Light to be the proper Substance of God, but a certain middle Nature; and 'tis as plain that I do, which lays a sufficient ground of Difference between us; so that my first Distinction is so far from falling to the Ground, that it stands upon firmer Ground than ever; and if my Adversary has but the Understanding and the Ingenuity of a Man, I dare appeal to him whether he be not fairly Answered and Confuted as far as concerns this first Particular. But whatever his Judgment be, I presume the Judicious Reader will be of mine, and so give me leave to advance forward to the

*Exception against the Second Article.*

THY Second is as insignificant, and like an Arrow shot at random, lights on thy own Head, being attended with some contradiction to thy former. Thou sayest, the Quakers represent this Light within as a sort of extraordinary Inspiration. VVhere learn'st thou this? Before it was a Divine Communication and Manifestation only, and now an extraordinary Inspiration, Thou wouldst have done well to have let the Quakers Principle alone till thou hadst learn it better, and more honestly to represent it. Is not Extraordinary, more than Common, or Communication and Manifestation *only*? Have not the Quakers declared the Light to be Universal, as well as Divine, in its Gift and Manifestation to the Sons of Men? It is certainly true they have; and yet I deny not but such who apply their Minds in Obedience to the teachings of this Light and Heavenly Gift, may be made Partakers of more,

more, *viz.* Extraordinary Gifts and Graces by the Inspiration of the same Spirit. If for this they have the Name of *Enthusiasts* given them, as in this Section of thy Postscript, tho it be in Derision, they will rejoyce in it; for it shall be as an Ornament of Grace to their Head, and Chains about their Neck. Again, in the same Section thou say'st I suppose it, *viz.* The Light within to be *a Man's natural and ordinary way of Understanding.* And just before thou madest it to be the very Essence and Substance of the Deity, which are thy own exprefs Words: See thy Confusion and Self-contradiction. By these Words, a Man's Natural and Ordinary Way of Understanding I take thee to intend the same thing as in *pag. 77.* where thou call'st it Reason and Conscience; and yet at the same time call'st it, The Divine  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\Theta$ , and Region of Truth, in which are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, the great and universal Oracle lodg'd in every Man's Breast, whereof the ancient Urim and Thummim was an exprefs Type or Emblem. Here thou debasest and confoundest thy Principle, making it to be a part of Man's Nature, whereas the Principle of Divine Light as held by the Quakers, is a distinct thing from Man's Soul, Reason, or Natural Conscience, *viz.* a more excellent Spirit and Principle. And herein I confess is a material Difference betwixt thy Principle of Light and the Quakers, as thou hast exprest it. Sure I am, it is a great Error to render the Divine  $\lambda\omicron\gamma\Theta$  by which all things were made, and are upheld, to be no higher a Principle than Man's Reason and Conscience, or natural and ordinary way of Understanding, which Reason is a Property Essential to

to him as Man. I confess to know the things of a Man, according to that Scripture, 1 Cor. 2. 9, 10, 14. *But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, &c.* By which it manifestly appears, that the true Knowledge of God and Spiritual Things are attain'd by the Spirit, which is superior to Man's rational Principle or natural Conscience, which may be defiled and corrupted, as 'tis said expressly of the impure, that even their Mind and Conscience is defiled.

*The Answer.*

**T**HIS Second Exception, consisting of several things, must be severally considered. First, He demands of me where I learnt, that the Quakers represent this Light within as a sort of extraordinary Inspiration? But before I answer his Question, I must settle the Meaning of my own Words, which he is pleased to take in a Sense quite different from what I intended, and what the scope and occasion of the Article requires. When therefore I say, that the Quakers represent this Light within as a sort of *Extraordinary* Inspiration, 'tis plain from the Antithesis of the Article that my meaning is, that they represent it as a Supernatural Gift or Grace, meaning by *Supernatural* not only something beside, above or beyond the *Nature* of Man; (for so also upon my Principle 'tis acknowledged to be *Supernatural*, because I expressly make it to be the very Essence of God) but something above or beyond the common *Order, State or Condition* of Human Nature. Supernatural not only as to the *Substance* of it, (for that's confess'd on both Hands,

only

only more exalted upon my Hypothesis than upon (theirs) but also as to its *Dispensation* and Order, being such an extraordinary superabundant Addition to the Nature of Man, as is not necessary he should always have, and without which he would still continue a rational and intelligent Nature. In opposition to which I said, that 'tis a Man's Natural and Ordinary way of Understanding, that is, that 'tis so far from being such an extraordinary Superaddition to Human Nature, as Man might be without, and yet be a reasonable Creature; that 'tis so much the Natural and Ordinary way of his Understanding, that he could not be able to understand at all without it: That he would not only have less Light should it be taken from him, but be quite in the Dark. In one Word, that 'tis not a thing of *Advantage* only, but of *Necessity*, necessary to the very Being as well as to the well or better Being of a reasonable understanding Spirit as such, who without this Light would not only not see so well, but would be able to see nothing, or not at all. This is the plain obvious Sense of my Words, only drawn out more at length, whereby it appears that my Notion differs considerably from that of the Quakers in this particular also.

And now if this be the Sense of my Proposition, (as 'tis plain that 'tis, it being not capable of any other) I may easily answer Mr. *Vickris* his Question that demands of me, Where I learnt that the Quakers represent this Light within as a sort of extraordinary Inspiration? For 'tis very plain that they make this Internal Light to be *Grace*, that special and peculiar Grace of Christ whereby he restores laps'd Man from the Corruption

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ruption of his Natural State. *For this End, says Mr. Barclay, (that is, for the Restoration of Man) God hath communicated and given unto every man a measure of the Light of his Son, a measure of Grace, or a measure of the Spirit, &c.* And again he calls it expressly a *Supernatural Gift and Grace of Christ*. Not that I would be thought to deny the Divine Light to be *Grace* as to certain *Degrees* of it. So far from that, that I think it to be the greatest *Grace* of God, that is, with respect to the *Degrees* of it, many of which I allow to be such extraordinary Superadditions to the common Order or State of Human Nature, as Man might simply be without, and yet continue in the Rank and Form of a reasonable and intelligent Creature. But not content with this, the Quakers make the Divine Light to be *Grace* simply and absolutely, as to its whole Nature and Kind, so as to be all over extraordinary. And if so, then they are so far from making it (as I do) necessary to a Man's Natural and Ordinary way of Understanding, that they must make it such a Superabundant Accession to the common Condition of Man's Nature, as without which he would still understand enough to denominate him a Rational Being. For certainly a Man may understand without *Grace*.

But that my Adversary may not pretend that I lay the whole stress of this matter upon a *Consequence*, (though it be a very plain one) I will prove the same by express Testimony, namely, That the Quakers do make their Light to be according to the before-stated Sense of the Word, something extraordinary, something added to the common way of Understanding, so as  
not

not to be simply necessary to Understanding in general, but only to the greater Advantage of it. For says Mr. Barclay, *That Man, as he is a Apology, Rational Creature, hath Reason, as a Natural Faculty of his Soul, by which he can discern things that are Rational, we deny not. For this is a Property Natural and Essential to him, by which he can know and learn many Arts and Sciences, beyond what any other Animal can do by the meer Animal Principle.* So that here the Light is not simply and ordinarily necessary to the understanding of things, which it seems may be done by Reason alone without the Light. To the same purpose again, says the same Author, *Man in his Natural State* (that is, in the state devoid of this Light, which he had just before call'd the state of Darknes) *can easily comprehend, and doth comprehend those things that are peculiar and common to him, as such.* And tho they commonly call the Natural state of Man (when without the Sensation of this Light) a state of Darknes, yet 'tis not because they suppose him to be absolutely dark, and to know nothing, but only dark as to Spiritual and Saving Truths. So that according to them there may be Knowledge and Understanding without the Divine Light, which therefore they must be suppos'd to look upon as an extraordinary Accession, and not as an ordinary Requisite to Human Understanding. Which again sets their Principle at a sufficient Distance from mine. Tho I must needs do them so much Justice as to confess, that herein they speak as agreeably to their Principle as I do to mine: For conceiving their Light not as the very Object of Human Understanding, not as that Truth it self which we perceive, (as is plain, because they do not make it

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it the Essence of God, as was noted above) but as something that serves for the clearer Revelation or Discovery of that Object, that is in one Word, conceiving it rather as a more advantageous *Medium*, than as an *Object*, they might well be excused from making it simply and absolutely necessary to Understanding: Whereas I conceiving the Divine Light to be the Omiform Essence of God, and accordingly making it to be the very immediate Object of my Understanding, that very Truth *which* (not that Medium *by which*) I contemplate, was obliged to suppose it so necessary to the common and natural way of Understanding, that there could be no such thing as Understanding without it; which I am sure a Quaker will not, or at least upon his Principles, can never say.

And thus far the Difference between us is very clear and plain, and would indeed be on all sides unexceptionable, but that Mr. *Vickris* has here spied out something, (for which I very much admire the Quickness of his Eye-sight) and that is a *Contradiction*. Before (says he) it was a *Divine Communication and Manifestation* only, and now an extraordinary *Inspiration*. Is not Extraordinary more than Common, or Communication and Manifestation only? And this he takes for a Contradiction of what was laid down in the first Article. But methinks Mr. *Vickris* should not undertake to write *Controversie*, unless he had known better how to judge of a Contradiction. For does it follow, that because I first say, that the Quakers represent their Light as a Divine Communication or Manifestation only, in opposition to its being the very Essence or Substance of God, and afterwards

wards add (as another Step or Degree of Difference) that they represent it as an *Extraordinary* one, in opposition to the Natural and Ordinary way of Understanding; I say, Does it hence appear that I contradict my self? What if Extraordinary be more than Common, or Communication or Manifestation only, does it therefore *Contradict* it? What, is every Addition a Contradiction? It may indeed be so, in case the Degree added in the Second Proposition were denied or excluded in the first. But is this the present Case? Tho Extraordinary Communication be more than bare Communication simply considered, is it therefore denied by it? Is it not plain that this is only an Abstraction, and not any Negation? For if he should take hold of the Term (*only*), where I suppose his Mistake lay, is it not very plain that the Term (*only*) in the First Article is not exclusive of *Extraordinary*, which is added in the Second, but only of the Divine Essence or Substance; this being the Sense of the Proposition, that they represent their Light not as the very Essence of God, but only as something communicated by God? And where then is there any appearance of a Contradiction? But lest Mr. *Vic-*  
*tris* should not take this, (for he has now given me just occasion to question his Capacity) I will illustrate it by an Instance: Suppose a *Cartesian* should say first, That Light is *only* the *Endeavour* of the Globules of the Second Element to Motion, not the Motion it self; and then afterwards should further say, that 'tis the Endeavour of those Globules to recede from the Center of the Luminous Body in a Right Line, would one of these Propositions contradict the other? 'Tis

more than I can find if they do. But he continues his Exception upon this part, asking me, *Have not the Quakers declared the Light to be Universal, as well as Divine, in its Gift and Manifestation to the Sons of Men?* Well what if they have, may they not also notwithstanding that, hold it to be an *Extraordinary* Gift, according to the above-stated Sense of the Word *Extraordinary*, as it signifies something superadded to the Natural way of Man's Understanding? Does *Extraordinary* in this Sense import any thing inconsistent with *Universal*? Suppose *Adam* had perfected in his Original State, and his whole Posterity had inherited that extraordinary Grace, that *Frantum Justitie*, which (according to some) was superadded to the Essential Perfection of his Human Nature, would it have been the less *Extraordinary*, that is, the less a Superaddition to the Nature of Man, because *Universal*? Sure Mr. *Vickris* must be but little acquainted with the Nature of *Opposition*, if he thinks there is any between these two things. But suppose there were, he himself is accountable for it, and not I. For I have brought Evidence enough to prove, that they do make their Light to be (as I have explained it) *Extraordinary*, and if that be inconsistent with their other Notion of its *Universality*, the Inconsistency lights upon themselves, and I can't help that.

And thus the Former Part of this Section is sufficiently vindicated; but it seems there is a Flaw in the Latter, which Mr. *Vickris* endeavours to make great Advantage of, though it be such as is plainly owing to the Captiousness and Uncandidness of his own Construction. *Again, (says he)*

he) in the same Section thou sayest, I suppose it, viz. *The Light within to be a Man's Natural and Ordinary way of Understanding.* And just before thou madest it to be the very Essence and Substance of the *Deity*, &c. Did I so? Then this one would think should have been a Key to my Meaning to any one that was not resolv'd to misunderstand and pervert it, that he might have something to expose and harangue upon. For is it in the least to be imagin'd, or does Mr. *Vickris* in his Conscience seriously think that I, who in this very Book, and in these very Articles he reflects upon, as well as in the whole Course of my other Writings upon this occasion, do all along earnestly contend, that this Internal Light is no other than the very Essence and Substance of God, whose Omniformity is exhibitiv of all things, and is the immediate Object of our Conception, that very Truth which we conceive: And that I who make this the ground of Difference between my Principle of the Light and that of the Quakers, that they do not make it the Substance of God, but only something communicated by or from him, whereas I expressly do: I say, can it be imagin'd that after all this, I should so far forget my self, as to make this Divine Light to be the very same thing with Human Understanding, and so confound (as he pretends) the Divine  $\lambda\gamma\theta$ , with Man's Reason and Conscience? Sure I should be fitter to pick Straws in *Bedlam*, than to write Books, should I be so senseless as to make Truth and Understanding, Object and Faculty, God and Creature all one. But as this is too gross to be my real Meaning, so the Scope and Antithesis of the Article do plainly shew that it was not. 'Tis plain from

thence (and no candid Reader would have understood me otherwise) that my Meaning, tho for Brevities sake not so explicitly worded, was no other than what has been already suggested, viz. That whereas the Quakers represent their Light as something extraordinarily superadded to the natural way of Understanding, (as supposing two distinct Lights in the Soul) and so not absolutely necessary to Understanding as such, which according to them may be without it: I on the contrary making but one way of Understanding in all, suppose this Light to be so far from being such an Extraordinary Superaddition, that 'tis so requisite to the Natural and Ordinary way of Understanding, that there is no Understanding without it. And so when I say, *Pag. 77. This is Reason, this is Conscience,* 'tis plain enough that I mean no more than that this (namely the Light) is that whereby I perform Acts of Reason and Acts of Conscience; not that it is my very reasoning Faculty, but that whereby I reason and discourse, as furnishing me with Idea's for my Contemplation. And if this be the Natural and Necessary Sense of my Words (as I believe Mr. *Vickris* must needs be sensible that it is) then his whole following Harangue about my confounding the Divine λόγος with Man's Natural Reason and Conscience is quite spoil'd, and from a piece of Rhetorick becomes a most trifling Impertinence, (or to borrow a Stroke of Oratory from him) *Insignificant, and like an Arrow shot at Random.*

*Exception*

*Exception against the Third Article.*

**I**N thy Third Section thou com'st in with a *Salvo Errore*. If I mistake not, the Quakers confine their Light within to some certain Objects, namely, Moral and Spiritual Truths in Order only to the Direction of Practice. How shouldst thou do otherwise but mistake the Principles of others, seeing thou art so confused about thine own? However, I must tell thee it is no small Fault at such an Uncertainty to expose Peoples Principles; and 'tis an Abuse to say, that the Quakers confine the Light within. It is Divine, Supernatural, and Uncircumscribable; in it are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge. Where have the Quakers taught otherwise? Have they not testified and declared the Light and the Spirit of Truth are one and the same in being, which will guide into all Truth, John 16. 13. The Quakers believe this Divine Light to be the Quickner of their Understandings to Know, and of their Wills to Love and Practise all Truth, and that it assists the Natural Faculties of the Soul in the Attainment of necessary Arts and Sciences, as well as capacitates it to Know and Practise Moral and Spiritual Truths. Thou may'st read what the Author to the Book of Wisdom says on this Subject, in the 9th and 10th Chapters.

And whereas thou say'st, the Quakers make the Light within a Supplement to Scripture, which they say is not sufficient without it, nor indeed any more than a meer dead Letter. I answer, These Words *Supplement to Scripture* are thy own, not ours; and this seems to be a Composition of thy

own Notion of the Quakers Faith concerning the Holy Scripture, without any Quotation of their Words or Writings; and as 'tis an Objection is built upon thy mistake in thy former Section, viz. *The Quakers represent this Light within as a sort of extraordinary Inspiration.* Which hath been already Answered, proving the Universality of the Divine Light in Man; which considered, there is no just Cause, for this is an Objection against the Quakers assigning the Scriptures to be insufficient without the Light, because the Knowledg of the Holy Scriptures cannot occur to the Understanding without it, and the Formal reason thereof is its Presence and Manifestation. The Quakers believe that Christ Jesus by his Divine Light within, doth in these Days, as in the Days of his Flesh, expound, fulfil, and open to the True Believers the Holy Scriptures, which according to the Apostles Exhortation to *Timothy, Chap. 2. 3, 15.* are able to make wise unto Salvation, (Note) *through Faith which is in Christ Jesus.* The Word Supplement in this Sense, I hope, will be found no Error, but according to thy Construction of the Quakers representing the Light within as a sort of Extraordinary Inspiration, *Seet. 2.* or special Priviledge of a certain Order of Men, their own Party, as in *Seet. 4.* And then making them to say the Scriptures with relation only to the Direction of Practice, (as thy Lines import, *Seet. 3.*) are not sufficient without it, nor indeed any more than a meer dead Letter, is to render the Quakers not only singular and erroneous in their Principle of the Light (which shall be more duly observed in its place) but also contemptuous of the Holy Scriptures as

useless

useless and insufficient to all but themselves, which is a great and hainous Abuse of a Society of People, without Cause and Provocation, and contrary to the Publick and Known Assertions both by Word and Writing, who believe according to the same Apostle to *Timothy, Ch. 2. 3, 16, 17.* that *all Scripture, &c.* And this shall suffice for an Answer to thy Third Section.

*The Answer.*

IF I delivered my self with more than ordinary Caution and Reservedness in this Article, it was because of my abundant Concern, lest I should injure those whom I was representing by a false Charge; tho I think it is too much for Mr. *Vickris* to condemn me for misrepresenting them, and yet to upbraid me with my *Tenderness* in doing so at the same Time. But I find upon further Examintion that I needed not to proceed with such Suspense in this matter, being so fully assured of my being in the right here, as well as in the other parts of my Account, that had I the Liberty to *New-Cast* this Article again, it should be in the very same Mould. Mr. *Vickris* indeed tells me that *'tis an Abuse to say the Quakers confine the Light within.* And I tell him, again, that *'tis an abuse in him to say, that this is my Charge.* I never said absolutely and simply that they confine the Light within, (which would imply a Confinement to Persons) but that they confine it to some certain Objects, namely, Moral and Spiritual Truths, in order only to the Direction of Practice. And that they do thus confine the Light is as plain and certain as  
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that they hold it, if Mr. Barclay may be allow'd to understand their Principles. For says he, *As God gave two great Lights to rule the outward World, the Sun and Moon, the greater Light to rule the Day, and the lesser Light to rule the Night; So hath he given Man the Light of his Son, a Spiritual Divine Light to rule him in the things Spiritual, and the Light of Reason to rule him in things Natural.* Here it is very plain, First, That he supposes two distinct Lights in the Soul, the Divine Light, and the Light of Reason, or the Natural Light, which by the way sufficiently confirms what was said in the last Section concerning their making the Divine Light an *Extraordinary* Communication, that is, *Superaccessory* to the Natural Light, or Man's Natural and Ordinary way of Understanding, which might remain intire and unextinguish'd, tho' separated from the Divine Light, as being a Principle wholly distinct from it, and that stands upon another Bottom. Contrary to what I contend for, namely, That there is but one Light in the Soul of Man, which is the Divine Light, wherein we see and perceive all things, and by which we naturally and ordinarily understand. 'Tis also very plain in the second place, That as he supposes two distinct Lights in the Soul, the Divine and the Natural, so he assigns them two distinct Offices, no less distinct than Day and Night, the Divine Light being to direct in things Spiritual as the Sun rules the Day; and the Natural Light being to direct in things Natural, as the Moon governs the Night. Each it seems has its proper Orb and Province; and they can no more interfere with one another's Order, than the Sun can usurp the

the Government of the Night, or the Moon assume to her self the Conduct of the Day. And if this be not to confine the Divine Light to some certain Objects, namely, to Moral and Spiritual Truths, I know not what is. 'Tis confined as much to such Objects as the Sun is confined to the Day, and I desire no more, thinking that to be Confinement enough. If Mr. *Vickers* had been but half so much *confined* to Civility and Good Behaviour, he would have treated me with more Humanity and Courtesie than he has done in some parts of his Book.

I might be more liberal of Quotations upon this occasion, if I thought there were any need; but since that already produced is so express to the purpose, I shall only take notice of a Remarkable Passage in the Preface to Mr. *Barclay's* Works, lately Printed in Folio, where the Ingenious Author giving an Account of his Apology for the True Christian Divinity, makes one himself for the Scholastick manner and way of his Composition, which it seems was in Tenderness to Scholars, and in Condescension to their Education. His Words are, *The Method and Style of the Book may be somewhat Singular, and like a Scholar; for we make that sort of Learning, no part of our Divine Science, &c.* Where 'tis plain, that by *that sort of Learning*, he means Human Learning, those Arts and Sciences which are the common Objects of our Academical Studies. And that by *our Divine Science* he means that Knowledge which is supernaturally communicated to them by the saving Light of Christ, whereof he had discoursed before. So that when he says we make that sort of  
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Learning no part of our Divine Science, it comes to as much as if he had said, *We make Human Learning, or those Arts and Sciences which are the common Objects of Academical Study, to be no part of that Knowledge which is supernaturally communicated to us by the Light of Christ.* And if Human Learning be no part of that Knowledge which comes by the Divine Light, then the Divine Light is not extended to Human Learning, and consequently must be confin'd to Spiritual Truths, the very Province which Mr. Barclay had assign'd it before.

And to this Supposition the Thread of their former Principle naturally leads them. For supposing the Divine Light to be an Extraordinary Communication of God, that is, something superadded to the Natural and Ordinary way of Understanding, there is all the reason in the World that they should assign to it Divine and Spiritual Objects as its proper Sphere and Province, since Natural things were before sufficiently discernible by a Natural Light and Principle. Especially considering that this Divine Light is also conceiv'd and represented by them as that very *Grace* of Christ whereby Men are Converted and Saved, and which was given to them by God for that very purpose. For so Mr. Barclay in his 5th and 6th. Propositions, reckoning up the Ends and Purposes for which the saving and spiritual Light (as he calls it) was given by God, makes them to consist in making manifest all things that are reprobable, in teaching all Temperance, Righteousness and Godliness, and (in general) in Lightning the Hearts of all in order to Salvation. So then it seems this Light is purely *in order to*

*Salvation*, and consequently ought to be confined to the things that concern it, that is, to Divine and Spiritual Truths in order to the Direction of Life and Manners. Herein therefore they are consonant to their Principles: As they do thus confine their Light to Spiritual things, so they ought thus to confine it. For what has *Grace* to do with the things of *Nature*? And as they follow their Principle, so I follow mine. For not conceiving this Internal Light as any thing superadded to the ordinary way of Man's Understanding, but as that whereby he naturally and ordinarily Understands, and not conceiving it after the manner of Grace neither (I mean as to its simple Kind, tho I allow it may have that Estimation in some of its Degrees) but rather as according to the Natural Order of Human Understanding: I had no reason to confine it (as the Quakers do) to Divine and Spiritual Truths, but to extend it to all Truth without Exception, which I suppose to be equally perceivable in this Divine Light, which as being the very Essence of God, must be equally exhibitiv of all.

But Mr. *Vickris* will still have it an *Abuse* to say, that the Quakers confine the Light within. For, says he, *It is Divine, Supernatural, and Uncircumscribable, and in it are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge.* Alluding, I suppose, to that of the Apostle concerning Christ, *Col. 2. 3.* But tho they do make it to be Divine and Supernatural, yet I do not see how they can make it, or he can call it, *Uncircumscribable*, since (as has been observed in the preceeding Pages) they do not make it to be the proper Essence or Substance of God, but a certain middle Nature between

tween God and Man: And for the same reason he cuts himself off from all Pretence to that Text concerning the *Divine Word*, that in him are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge, which indeed is very applicable, and carries a very apposite and emphatick Sense upon my Hypothesis, who make the Divine Light within to be the very Divine  $\lambda\gamma\theta$  himself, the Substantial and Essential Wisdom of God; but must be altogether *usurpt* upon his, who either does, or by the Principles of Quakerism is obliged to make it not the very Essence of the Deity, but something of a middle Nature.

But says he, *Have they not testified and declared the Light and the Spirit of Truth are all one and the same Being, which will guide into all Truth?* John 16. 13. And I do not at present well remember whether they have or no, nor shall I give my self the Trouble to enquire, thinking it altogether impertinent. But sure I am, that they have often *testified and declared* that the Light is not the proper Essence of God, but a certain middle Being between God and Man: and if they will afterwards testify and declare that 'tis the very same with the Spirit of Truth (which is really and truly God) I think they will evidently testify against themselves, and declare Contradictions, and then 'tis no great matter what they *testify* or *declare*. But besides, suppose they did make the Light to be one and the same with the Spirit of Truth, which according to that of St. John, will guide into all Truth; yet 'tis plain from the foregoing Measures that they *must*, and from the Context of the place, that they *ought* to mean it only of Spiritual, Saving and necessary Truths, which  
may

may very well consist with their supposed Confinement of the Light.

But how can this be so confined, when Mr. *Vickris* testifies again, and declares that *the Divine Light does assist the Natural Faculties of the Soul in the Attainment of Arts and Sciences?* But how is this consistent with what he says in the Beginning of his Book, where he calls this Corrupt Wisdom, and the Forbidden Fruit, and what will prove Folly in the End, and the Wisdom that is Below, and that which God's Wisdom from Above ever did and will confound? See the Inconsistency and Unfincerity of this Writer! When it would serve his turn to disparage and beat down Human Learning, then 'tis Corrupt VV Wisdom, Forbidden Fruit, and I know not what. And when he had another turn to serve, (that is, to contradict me) then this Wisdom, as corrupt as it is, is taught us by the Instruction of the Divine Light. But stay, Sir, tho this Divine Light be not as you say the very Essence of God, yet is it so far divided against him, as to teach what is contrary to him, and what his Wisdom ever did and will confound? Are the *Divine Light* and the *Divine Wisdom* at such Defiance with each other? But 'tis Mr. *Vickris* that is at Defiance with himself, and I am afraid will not easily be reconciled. For if the Divine Light teaches this sort of Wisdom, then 'tis not Corrupt, which contradicts what he said in the *other* place; and if this sort of Wisdom be Corrupt, then the Divine Light does not teach it, (as being a Pure and Clean Principle, and such as *cannot consent to any Evil or Wickedness*) which contradicts what he says *here*. So that either way Contradiction is his Doom.

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As

As to what I said concerning the Quakers making the Light within a *Supplement to Scripture*, &c. it was not intended as a direct and particular Objection against them, of it self, but only to confirm the other, wherein they are charged with confining it to Moral and Spiritual Truths in order to the Direction of Practice. For that being the acknowledged End and Use of Scripture, it seems an high Presumption, that what is made a Supplement to the Scripture, is also intended for the very same End and Use. And therefore Mr. *Vickris* need not have opposed himself against this as a direct and particular Objection, it being not by me either intended or used as such. For whatever my Thoughts may be concerning the Sufficiency or Insufficiency of the Scripture without the inward Light, I had no occasion then, nor have any Mind at present to engage in a Dispute about that matter. Only I would desire Mr. *Vickris* and his Brethren by the way to consider, whether they can answer that Argument of *Episcopus*, whereby he proves the Vanity and Absurdity of the *Spiritualists*, (as he calls them) in making the *Inward Word* the Interpreter of Scripture. Either (says he) they will have that inward Word, as they call it, to have an intelligible Sense in it, or not to have an intelligible Sense. If they will have it to contain an intelligible Sense, then they must grant that that Sense being perceived by the Understanding may be pronounced and expressed by outward Speech. And if so, then it follows that this Sense may also be written, since whatever is pronounced by the Mouth, may also be expressed in Writing. But then this written Sense will again be nothing else than an external Word, which being exprest in Letters

will according to them be nothing else but an inky Letter or Scripture, which they deny to be sufficient. But if they will have this inward Word to have in it no intelligible Sense, or that may be pronounced, or written, then it will necessarily follow, that this their Word is no Word, or only a vain foolish Word. For such must that Word be which has no Intelligible Sense. If they say, that this Word is not perceived but by him upon whom it is immediately impressed by God. Then I say again, Either it is impressed without any intelligible Sense, or with it, If without any, then the same Difficulty will return, viz. That 'tis a vain and foolish Word. But if it be imprinted with intelligible Sense, then what hinders but that it may be expressed and written? And then how will it differ from that written Word we have hitherto treated of?

But he tells me that these Words, *Supplement to Scripture*, are my own, not theirs. It may be so, I will not stand with Mr. Vickris for a Word, since he is so kind to me as to acknowledge all that I intended by it, namely, That the Light is the Interpreter of Scripture, and that the Scripture is not sufficient without it; without denying that 'tis not any thing more than a meer dead Letter, a Phrase usually applied by the Quakers to the Scripture considered in its self, as unaccompanied with the Testimony of the Internal Light. For the further clearing of which Notion, when any of them write next, I would desire them to take the Argument of the before-mentioned *Learned Objector* in their way.

He tells me again that this, as 'tis an Objection, is built upon my Mistake in my former Section, viz. That the Quakers represent this Light within as a sort of Extraordinary Inspiration, which



which he says has been answered already in proving the *Universality* of the Divine Light. But I answer, First, That this was not intended as a particular Objection of its self, but only to second and inforce another. Secondly, That if it be an Objection, it is not built upon what he supposes, which is only a mistake of his own concerning my meaning by the Word *Extraordinary*, which because by me not opposed to Universal, cannot be said to be any way answered by his proving the Universality of the Divine Light. Then as to what he says afterwards concerning my rendring the Quakers contemptuous of Holy Scripture, as useless to all but themselves, in regard that 'tis held as a dead Letter without the Light, which Light according to my Construction of their Principle, is an Extraordinary Inspiration, and a special Priviledge of a certain Order of Men, their own Party. I answer, That indeed the Scripture would be made useless to all but themselves upon this double Supposition. 1. That 'tis a dead Letter without the Light. And, 2. That this Light is their own peculiar Priviledge; but then this latter (upon which the Strength of the Objection turns) was not absolutely charged upon them by me. For as for the Term *Extraordinary*, it has been more than once noted, that it was not used in a Sense opposite to *Universal*. And as for their making the Light a special Priviledge of a certain Order of Men, that this is not to be understood in such a Sense as will lay any Ground for my Adversary's Complaint, will sufficiently appear, when I come to consider his Exception against the Fourth Article, to the Examination of which I now proceed.

Ex.

*Exception against the Fourth Article.*

**T**HE Fourth is a down-right Falſity, viz. The Quakers make their Light within a ſpecial Priviledg of a certain Order of Men, their own Party. Not indeed as to the Poſſibility, yet they do as to the Act, making none but thoſe of their own way to be actually enlightned by it. This is ſo abundantly confuted by the Writings in general of thoſe People, more particularly in the afore-recited Book of *Robert Barclay's*, which conſidering thou haſt read, I am the more amazed at thy Assertion. They ſay all are actually enlightned by it, all are call'd, but all have not obey'd, according to thoſe Scriptures, *Micah 6. 8. He hath ſhewed thee, O man, what is good, &c. 1 John 9. 3, 19. 1 Cor. 13. 17. Tit. 2. 11. &c.* Thy Diſtinction of a Poſſibility, and not actually with reſpect to the Divine Illumination of this Principle is trivial, tho not with reſpect to Salvation by it. The Capacity or Poſſibility is not, nor can be in Man abſtract from the actual illuminating Power and Spirit, no more than ſeeing, if the Light be not ſeparate from the Eye. The Quakers have, and ſtill do declare that Chriſt Jeſus the Light of the World, is the Univerſal Free Gift of God, for the Benefit of all Men, in order to their Salvation. And is not this Common, yet ſpecial Priviledge, becauſe dearly purchaſed and freely beſtowed on loſt Man? That thou may'ſt not want occaſion to traduce the Quakers, thou haſt ſo much overdone it in this Section, as to contradict thy ſelf in the Fifth. As for Inſtance, *Seet. 4.* to be actually

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enlightned according to thy Principle is no special Priviledge, but the common and universal Benefit of all Men, yea, of all the Intelligent Creation, who all see and understand in this Light of God, without which there would be neither Truth nor Understanding. On the contrary, *Seet. 5.* thou say'st, thy Light does not Formally enlighten or instruct thee, but when thou carefully attends to and consults it, and read what is written in those Divine Ideal Characters. The like Doctrine thou hast, *Pag. 71.* of thy Book, *Seet. 5.* and 6. where treating of thy double Illumination of the Divine  $\lambda\gamma\theta$ , viz. Fundamentally and Potentially, or else Effectually or Actually; in the former Sense (thou say'st) he enlightens every Man; in the latter, only those who duly consult him and attend to him. See what Contradiction thy strain'd Notions run thee into. One while to be actually enlightned, is the Common and Universal Benefit of all Men; another while only of those who consult it and attend to it, and all to avoid being thought to Symbolize with the Quakers in thy Notion of the Divine Light. Thy Distinction of Potentially and Actually can have no more in it than the Difference in the Subject, the one Universal Act of the Word or Light enlightning every Man, comprehends both. These are but new invented Terms to express the most ancient, and more Divinely, and better reveal'd Truths of the Gospel.

*The Answer.*

**T**HIS Exception seems to have in it the most of Subtilty and Artifice, and to be the most fair

fair and plausible of any: But I make no great  
 Question but that it will have as fair and clear an  
 Answer as any of the rest. And because a Que-  
 stion well stated, and put in a good Light, is half  
 resolv'd, I shall first of all define the Sense and  
 Meaning of my own Words in this Fourth Arti-  
 cle, that so it may appear what it is that I there  
 affirm, & what he does or should deny, & wherein  
 the Point of the Question between us lies. Now  
 when I say that the Quakers make their Light  
 within a special Priviledge of a certain Order of  
 Men, 'tis plain, First, in general, from the Ar-  
 ticle its self, that I do not mean as to the *Capa-*  
*city* or *Possibility*, but as to the *Act*. For I grant  
 as to the *Possibility*, that they suppose all Men to  
 be indifferently capable of the Divine Illuminati-  
 on, as appears from their contending against the  
 Doctrin of Absolute Reprobation, and for Uni-  
 versal Grace. I do not therefore make them to  
 confine the Light as to the Possibility, but only as  
 to the *Act*. And then as to the *Act* (in which respect  
 alone I say they confine it) it is also very plain,  
 that I mean not the *Act* of *Having* or *Possessing* the  
 Light (for I know very well that 'tis one of their  
 Fundamental Tenets, that God has Communica-  
 ted and given unto every Man a Measure of the  
 Light of his Son, a Measure of Grace, or a Mea-  
 sure of the Spirit, as Mr. Barclay expresses it) *Apology*  
 but the *Act* of being *enlightned* by it. And that *P. 330.*  
 this is my Meaning, the Tenor of my Words do  
 sufficiently shew, because I there say, *Tho they do*  
*not make it a special Priviledge as to the Possibility,*  
*yet they do as to the Act, making none but those of*  
*their own way to be actually enlightned by it.* Where  
 by *Act* it is plain that I mean not the *Act* of *Pos-*  
*session,*

*session*, but the Act of *Illumination*. For Mr. *Vickers* is to consider, that 'tis one thing to have or to possess the Light, and another thing to be actually enlightned by it. And they who very zealously contend for the Universality of the former, may at the same time, and that without any inconsistency, confine the latter. Which is the thing that I affirm the Quakers do, *viz.* That though they do not confine the Light either as to the Possibility of being enlightned by it, or as to the Act of having or possessing it, yet they do confine it as to the Act of Illumination. That they do thus confine it, I will first shew, and then consider what he alledges to the contrary, which I think is a fair and distinct way of Proceeding.

That the Quakers do confine the Light as to the Act of Illumination to certain Men, or to Men of a certain Order, I think will be readily granted me, if I can shew that they do thus confine it to the *Regenerate*. And that they do so, I believe I can not only render exceeding Probable, but even *Demonstrate*; which I undertake to do in this Form of Argument:

They that do exclude all Men that are in their Natural and Corrupt Estate from the actual Illumination of the Divine Light, do confine the Divine Light as to the Act of Illumination to the *Regenerate*.

But the Quakers do exclude all Men that are in their Natural and Corrupt Estate from the Actual Illumination of the Divine Light.

Therefore the Quakers do confine the Divine Light as to the Act of Illumination to the *Regenerate*.

The first of these Propositions is most evident.  
The Second I prove thus :

They that do exclude all Men that are in their Natural and Corrupt Estate from any *Sensation* or *Feeling* of the Divine Light, they do exclude all Men that are in their Natural Corrupt Estate from the Actual Illumination of the Divine Light.

But the Quakers do exclude all Men that are in their Natural and Corrupt Estate from any *Sensation* or *Feeling* of the Divine Light.

Therefore the Quakers do exclude all Men that are in their Natural Corrupt Estate from the Actual Illumination of the Divine Light.

The First of these Propositions is again most evident. And for the Proof of the Second, which alone requires it, I appeal to the Testimony of their most Authentick Writer Mr. *Barclay*, Apology  
P. 310. who in his Fourth Proposition speaking concerning the Natural Condition of Man, gives this express Account of it, that he is not only fall'n, degenerated and dead, but *deprived of the Sensation or Feeling of this Inward Testimony, or Seed of God; And is subject to the Power, Nature and Seed of the Serpent, which he sows in Men's Hearts, while they abide in this Natural and Corrupted Estate. From whence it comes, that not only their Words and Deeds, but all their Imaginations are Evil perpetually in the sight of God, as proceeding from this depraved and wicked Seed. Man therefore as he is in this state can know nothing aright; yea, his Thoughts and Conceptions concerning God and Things Spiritual (until he be disjoyn'd from this evil Seed, and united to the Divine Light) are unprofitable both to himself and others.* Thus Mr. *Barclay*. Now how far Man in his Natural and Corrupt Estate may be capa-

ble of conceiving rightly, either of God, or of Divine things, 'tis not my present Business to enquire or dispute. But what I observe from these Words of Mr. *Barclay* is this, That Natural Men, or Men in their Natural and Corrupt Estate, however they may have the Divine Light in them Seminally or Radically, yet they have not (while in that state) any Sensation or any Feeling of it. They are his own express Words. And if they have not any Sensation or Feeling of the Light, then they are not actually enlightened by it, which agrees with the Distinction before laid down, that tho they have the Light as to the Act of Possession, yet they have it not as to the Act of Illumination. And if all Natural Men are excluded from the actual Illumination of the Divine Light, then 'tis plain that the Divine Light as to the Act of Illumination, (tho not as to the Act of Possession) is confined to the Regenerate. Which was the Proposition I undertook to prove.

And that all Natural and Unregenerate Men, tho they have the Divine Light lodg'd in them, are yet supposed to be deprived of all actual Illumination by it, may be fairly collected from another remarkable place in Mr. *Barclay*, where he uses this as an Argument to prove, that the Light is a Substance not an Accident, because it may be in the Heart of wicked Men without denominating them, that is, as appears by the Tenor of his Discourse, without affecting them, or deriving any influence or Vertue upon them. His Words are these, *We know it to be a Substance, because it subsists in the Hearts of Wicked Men, even while they are in their Wickedness.* Now no Accident

dent can be in a Subject, without it gives the Subject its own Denomination; as where Whiteness is in a Subject, there the Subject is call'd White. So we distinguish betwixt Holiness, as 'tis an Accident, which denominates Man so, as the Seed receives a place in him; and betwixt this Holy Substantial Seed, which many times lies in Man's Heart, as a naked Grain in a Stony Ground. So also, as we may distinguish betwixt Health and Medicine. Health cannot be in the Body, without the Body be called Healthful. Because Health is an Accident. But Medicine may be in a Body that is most unhealthful, for that it is a Substance. In which Words Mr. Barclay does, as far as I can judge, plainly imply, that wicked Men, tho they have the Light really and truly in them, as well as those that are good, yet they are not actually enlightened by it. It is indeed in their Hearts, but it lies dormant there like hot Embers cover'd up under the Ashes, without affecting, or denominating, or enlightning them. For it seems, it lies in them as a naked Grain in a Stony Ground, and as Physick in a Body that is not at all wrought upon by it; that is, it lies there, and that's all. Which amounts to as much as if he had said in the Words of the before-mention'd Distinction, that they have it indeed as to the Act of Possession, but not as to the Act of Illumination. Which must therefore be confined to good Men only, or to the Regenerate.

To this purpose I might cite many other Passages which occur up and down in the Writings of Mr. Barclay, as when he says (as he does frequently) that the Divine Light or Seed lies in wicked Men, hurt, bruised, wounded, slain, yea,



Apology  
P. 334.

Ibid.

and buried. And when he says that in this Seed in the Hearts of all Men is the Kingdom of God, as in Capacity to be produced, or rather exhibited, according as it receives Depth, is nourished and not choaked. And when he says that this Seed was in the Pharisees, as a Seed lying in a Barren Ground, which springs not forth, &c. But I forbear more Quotations, having I think already produced enough to make it plain and out of question that they do exclude all wicked Men from the actual Illumination, though not from the actual Possession of the Divine Light; or which is all one, that they confine the Divine Light to good Men, to the Regenerate, as to the Act of Illumination, tho not as to the Act of Possession. In short, All have it, but the regenerate only are actually enlightened by it.

I may urge this also as another Argument to prove that they do confine the Light as to the Act of Illumination to a certain number of Men, because (as every body knows that has had the least Conversation either with them or their Writings) they do confine it only to those that turn their Soul and Mind inwards unto it, (for till then, as the Prefacer to Mr. Barclay's Works says, *Man is darkness*) at the same time supposing that not all, but a very few do so convert themselves unto it. Upon which double Supposition are grounded their so often repeated Admonitions and Exhortations to those they address their Writings or Discourses to, that they would turn their Souls inwards unto the Light, that they would mind, heed, follow it, and wait upon it in quietness and silence, &c. All which would

P. 3.

would be extremely ridiculous and impertinent, if either Men might be enlightned without converting themselves to the Light, or if it were certain and necessary that all Men should so convert themselves to it. Since therefore they do confine the Light as to the Act of Illumination to those that convert or introvert themselves to it, and at the same time do not make all Men to do so, it appears plainly that they do confine it to a certain number of Men.

And since again (as is well known) they look upon themselves as the only Professors and Embracers of the Truth of God, and the only Followers of the Light, and the only Converters of themselves to it, (which it seems is so much the proper Characteristick of a Quaker, that when any one is Profelyted to their way, 'tis ordinary for them to say, *Such an one is turn'd to the Light*) I think I had very good reason to say that they confined the Light to their own Party, meaning, (as plainly appears, and as I have often suggested) not as to the Capacity or Possibility, nor as to the Act of Possession, but only as to the Act of Illumination. That tho other Men as well as themselves, yea, all Men have the same Light in them, yet *they* only see by it, and have actual Illumination from it, because they only turn themselves unto it, and (to express it in their more peculiar Phrase) are *Inward with it*. Wherein I think they differ again sufficiently from me, who am so far from confining the Divine Light in the least respect or degree, that I extend it as a common Benefit to all Men without Exception, yea, to all the Intelligent part of the Creation (which by the way I do not find they do, nor do

do I see how upon their Principle they can, since making it the Grace of Christ they must confine it to *Man*) and that not only as to the Act of Possession, but as to the act of Illumination too, because I expressly say, that *they all see and understand in this Light of God, without which there would be neither Truth nor Understanding.*

Now to consider what Mr. *Vickris* alleges to the contrary: He says First of all, that it is a down-right Falsity that the Quakers do thus confine the Light. But let him prove this to be a Falsity as well as say it. He says again, that 'tis abundantly confuted by the Writings of the Quakers in general, particularly those of *Robert Barclay*. But I have made the contrary appear from those very Writings. But he says again, that they say all are actually enlightned by it, &c. To which I return. That then they say Contradictions, and are inconsistent with themselves. But he says again, that the Quakers have, and still do declare, that Christ Jesus the Light of the World is the Universal Free Gift of God, for the Benefit of all Men, in order to their Salvation. But by Mr. *Vickris's* leave this does not reach the Point in question, as proving the Universality of the Light only as to the Capacity of being enlightned by it, or as to the Act of Possession only, which I never supposed them to deny. But the Question is concerning the Universality of the Light as to the Act of Illumination, which is not at all proved by saying, that Christ Jesus the Light of the World is the Universal Free Gift of God, for the Benefit of all Men in order to their Salvation. But he further says, that

that my Distinction of a Possibility, and not Actually with respect to the Divine Illumination of this Principle, is trivial. But why so? May there not be a Capacity of being enlightned where there is no actual Illumination? Are not these distinct *Idea's*? And may not therefore one be without the other? But he says, the Capacity or Possibility is not, nor can be in Man abstract from the Eye. No? Why then do they so often no more than seeing, if Light be not separate from the actual Illuminating Power and Spirit, divide the one from the other, in making all to be capable of Illumination by the Divine Light, when yet according to them all are not actually enlightned by it, nor any at all times? Of the former, That all are not actually enlightned by it, I have already given an Account out of Mr. Barclay: And as to the Latter, That none are actually enlightned by it at all times, the same Author is so kind as to furnish me with an Account in another place, where he gives this as a Reason why the Light is no Power or Natural Faculty of a Man's Mind, because he cannot be actually enlightned by it at pleasure, but must wait for the Irradiations of it. For, says he, *This Light, Seed, &c. appears to be no Power or Natural Faculty of Man's Mind, because a Man that is in Health can, when he pleases, stir up, move and exercise the Faculties of his Soul. He is absolute Master of them. But this Light and Seed of God in Man he cannot move and stir up when he pleases, but it moves, blows and strives with Man as the Lord seeth meet. For tho there be a Possibility of Salvation to every man during the Day of his Visitation, yet cannot a man at any time when he pleases stir up that*

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P. 338.

that Light and Grace, but he must wait for it: &c. Bringing in the of Comparison the Lake of Bethesda, and the Angel at certain times moving upon the Waters. From which Words of Mr. Barclay it plainly appears, that no Man, tho never so close a Follower of the Light, is under the actual Illumination of it at all times; and yet the same Author does not deny, but every where earnestly contend, that the Light is always in Man as well as in every Man; and if this be not to abstract the Capacity or Possibility from the Act of Illumination by the Light, I despair ever to know what is. And why may not the Capacity of Illumination be abstracted from Act, since they are not only in themselves distinct, but proceed from different Causes, and between which there is (according to them) no necessary Connection? The former depending upon the being only of the Divine Light, and the latter upon the Soul's *Introversion* of it self to it, without which she will not be enlightned by that Light which she bears. According to what Mr. Barclay says upon that Text, *Rom. 3. 11. There is none that understandeth*: Why understand they not, but because they are not turn'd to the Light that can give them Understanding?

As to his Comparison taken from seeing, which he will not have possible to be abstracted, if Light be not separated from the Eye. I answer, First, That if there be any Force in it, 'tis against themselves, as convincing them of Absurdity in Abstracting or Dividing what is not to be divided. For the Signification of it must be this, That as the Act of Seeing is not to be abstracted from the Capacity, when  
Light

Truth  
clear'd of  
Calumnies,  
p. 8.

Light is not separated from the *Eye*, so the Act of Illumination is not to be abstracted from the Capacity of it, when the Divine Light is not separated from the *Soul*. And why then do they abstract the Act of Illumination from the Possibility, when they suppose the Divine Light to be present in the Soul; as 'tis plain they do when they teach, that 'tis not in the power of Man to be enlightned when he pleases, though the Light be really in him? If the actual Illumination of the Soul must necessarily follow upon the Presence or Being of the Divine Light in it, then why do they abstract it from it, by supposing that Man has it not always in his Power to move and stir up the Light, as was before noted? But indeed, whatever Connexion there may be between the Presence of the Divine Light and the actual Illumination of the Soul, it does not follow that there is any from the Similitude he here uses, in which there is no Force at all, the ground of it rightly conceived not being true. For *Seeing* may be either taken in a *Material* Sense, for that *Physical Impression* made upon the *Retina* by the Rays of Light that pass in various Refractions through the several Humours of the Eye; or else in a *Formal* Sense, for that *Sensation* of the Soul which ordinarily accompanies that Impression, and whereby she is conscious of it. If *Seeing* be taken in the former Sense, then indeed it will hardly be possible to abstract the Act of *Seeing* from the Capacity of it, if the Light be not separated from the Eye. But if *Seeing* be taken in the latter way, for the Sensation of the Soul, whereby she is conscious of that *Physical Impression* made upon the Organs of Sight, which

(which is the most proper acceptation of the Word Seeing) then the Act of Seeing may very well, and is often abstracted from the Capacity of it; and that notwithstanding the Light be not separated from the Eye: There being nothing more common than for Men, whose Minds are deeply fix'd upon some engaging Objects that call off and divert their Attention another way, not to observe what stands just before their Eyes, and what Physically and Materially speaking they cannot chuse but see. So that this Comparison as prettily as it looks, will not serve the purpose for which it is used. But I forget my self; 'tis pity a good Similitude should be spoil'd by being too nicely examin'd.

And now as to the Contradiction which he pretends to find between the Fourth Article, where all Men are supposed to be actually enlightned, and the Fifth, where the Light is supposed not Formally to enlighten me, but when I attend to it and consult it: Though he has so lately spoiled his Credit with me in this point, that I shall not be very forward to take his Word for a *Contradiction* again, yet I shall not scruple to confess, that there is at first View some Appearance of Opposition between these two, but I think no more than what any Fair and Candid Reader may easily accommodate, only by considering and collating together the two different occasions upon which these two seemingly opposite Passages were delivered. For in the Fourth Section, being to oppose my Notion against the Quakers as to the Confinement of the Light to certain Men, as to the Act of Illumination, there I lay  
down

down this Assertion, That *all Men are actually enlightened*. And in the Fifth Section, being to oppose my self against another Notion of the Quakers, in making the Light to be some determinate formed Dictate or Proposition, expressly and positively directive and instructive; there I say, that it does not formally enlighten me but when I attend to it and consult it, as being no formed Proposition, but only the Essential Truth of God. Wherein 'tis plain that I do not deny the actual Illumination of all, (the thing asserted in the former Section) but only determin the manner of it, that it is not done by any Proposition ready formed and held forth to the Soul, but by the Soul's consulting the Divine Idea's, or Essential Truth of God. For when I say it enlightens Men only when they attend to it and consult it, I do not suppose that there are any that are not actually enlightened, but that those who are enlightened are enlightened by attending, supposing at the same time that all Men do in some measure attend to, and consult the Divine Light, so far at least, as is necessary to their common and ordinary way of Understanding, and to render them rational and intelligent Beings. 'Tis true indeed, the Quakers do also make the Light to enlighten none but those that convert themselves to it: But then there is this material Difference between us, that they representing the Light as an extraordinary Accession to the Order of Human Understanding, and as a Saving Grace in the whole Kind of it, do not suppose it necessary that all should turn themselves to it: Whereas I not looking upon it as an Extraordinary Grace



as to the whole kind, but as an ordinary Requisite to Human Understanding, do suppose it necessary for all to turn to it, or consult it so far, as to render them thinking and understanding Beings. And so long as I make all Men in some measure to consult it, though I do withal say, that they are enlightned by it only when they consult it, I do not thereby deny that all are actually enlightned by it. For this does not deny the Universality of Actual Illumination, but only determins and specifies the way and manner of it. So that here is no Contradiction, but all things are Uniform and Consistent.

*Exception against the Fifth Article.*

**T**HE Fifth I take in the First Part of it, to be the same in Substance with thy First, differing in Form of Expressions, viz. *The Quakers by their Light within understand some Determinate Formed Dictate or Proposition expressly or positively directing or instructing them to do so or so, as in thy first thou called'st it some Divine Communication or Manifestation only.* Where didst thou learn this Definition of the Quakers Faith and Doctrine of the Light within? The Quakers believe the Light of Christ within to be God's Divine Oracle of Wisdom in the Soul, the Former, Dictator and Determiner of Heavenly Propositions, them directing and instructing what to chuse, and what to refuse, as the Original Cause of the Knowledge and Love of Truth, which are its proper Effects. Now wherein is the Quakers Light, as thou term'st it, inferior to that of thine, except in the differing Character thou givest it?

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They own the Real and Substantial Truth of God, the Life of the Word, the Light of Men, as Christ said of himself, *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.* That this Divine Light, which is the Light of Men, is always in some Degree and Measure present in the Soul, by which it is upheld either in God's Love or Anger, the Quakers believe; and that in him we live, move, and have our Being, tho with respect to Operation after a different manner and measure, and passing the Understanding of Man. And whereas thou say'st, Thy Light is only the Essential Truth of God; This is an high Presumption, about which I have already shew'd thy Confusion in other places, calling it Reason and Conscience, and a Man's Natural and Ordinary way of Understanding. Consider, *Mat. 6. 22, 23.* The Light of the Body, &c. *If therefore the Light that is in thee be Darkness, &c.* So may I say, if that Doctrin and Principle thou recommendest to the World for Truth and Excellency be erroneous and faulty, how great is that Error and Fault? Again, thou say'st, Thy Light is always present to thy Understanding, and intimately united with it still, *Sect. 5.* which in thy Sense of the Light is to say, thy Soul is never without thy Reason and Conscience, I wish they were both reform'd; that thou may'st be no more guilty of these and such like false Aspersions; That the Light, supposing it to be what really it is, a distinct Principle from the Soul, is always present to the Understanding, which implies its Operation upon the Natural Capacity or Organ, the ordinary means of knowing, I conceive is more than can be safely or experimentally said,

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because

because the Organ may be hurt, and the Understanding in that Sense interrupted, and consequently no fit Medium or Receptacle either for the Soul or its Light. Besides, the Soul may be absent from the Natural Understanding by the Interposition of Spiritual, as well as Natural Causes, and yet present with the Light in its Spiritual way of Understanding. But to say as thou dost, that Thy Light is only the Essential Truth of God, and that it is always present to thy Understanding, and intimately united with it, and yet that it does not formally enlighten or instruct it, but when carefully attended to and consulted, seems to discover a Contradiction in its self, and to the Formal Reason of its Being, and Presence, and Sufficiency in the one Act of the same Principle, as well as to the State and Nature of Intimate Union. For how can any thing be intimately united to its Principle, and not partake of its Nature and Influences, which is the Reason and Manner of its Union? And how can this be, and not carefully attended to and consulted? Is not this manifest Confusion? That the Presence of the Light does enlighten and instruct all in some Sense and Degree, is sufficiently proved by Scripture. By thy Word Formally Enlighten I apprehend thou intendest the Operative Exercise, as in *Pag. 17.* and as here applied to Light, signifies no more than actually to enlighten, *ex parte Objecti.* I grant such as do not carefully attend to and consult this Divine Light, do not witness the Increases of it unto the Redemption and Salvation of their Souls.

It is the Path of the Just that is as the shining Light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect Day. If the Light, as thou assertest, doth not formally enlighten or instruct, but when carefully attended to and consulted, how then should it quicken and raise the Soul from Death to Life, according to the multiplied experience of Holy David? And how doth God speak once, yea twice, yet Man perceiveth it not, *Job* 33. 14, 15, 16, 17. and *Isa.* 65. How frequently doth the Lord complain by his Prophets of his calling to his People to return and repent, but they would not answer? Note, the Call of God is not without Instruction; read *Mic.* 6. 8. and *Prov.* 1. from 20, to the end. And see what Wisdom does also in *Nehemiah*, how they rebelled against God, notwithstanding he gave his good Spirit to instruct them. The Testimony of *John* the Evangelist, the 5<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>th</sup>, *Ephes.* 2. 1, 4, 5. *2 Cor.* 4. 6, 7. These and many other Texts, abundantly prove that God quickens and enlightens Man, before Man can turn unto him.

*The Answer.*

I Have given my self the trouble to set down this Exception at large, not because I intend to answer it all, but that it may appear to the Discerning Reader, that there is a great deal of it which I need not answer, as being either answered already, or so very impertinent and remote from the business, that it deserves no consideration. But in the first place, I cannot but admire at the singular Happiness of his Fancy, in imagining the former part of the Fifth Article to be

the same in substance with the First, and to differ only in form of Expression. In the First it is said, that the Quakers usually talk of the Light within, as of some Divine Communication or Manifestation only; that is, as it has been explain'd, that they represent their Light, not as God himself, but only as a divine Communication, or as something communicated or exhibited by God. In the Fifth, it is said, That the Quakers by their Light within (that is, as Directive,) understand some determinate formed Dictate or Proposition, expressly and positively directing and instructing them to do so or so: That is, that they make the Direction of the Light, or the Light as directive, to consist in Dictates or Propositions ready form'd and presented to the view of the Soul, whereby she is formally taught and instructed. Now are these Two the same? If they are, so are a Square and a Circle, Mr. *Vickers* and my Self, Quakerism and Primitive Christianity. But he demands of me where I learnt this Account of the Quakers Faith and Doctrin of the Light within, viz. That they represent its direction by a determinate form'd Dictate or Proposition? I answer, from one that may be presumed to have dived into the bottom of Quakerism, and to have comprehended the whole Mystery of it, as well as any Man of that Profession, and that is Mr. *Barclay*, who speaking of that Letter of our Master that is writ in our Hearts, says, *Our Master is always with us, and he requires us to do all our Works by his immediate Counsel, Direction, &c.* And again to the same effect, speaking of the Jews rejecting Christ, notwithstanding that they had the Scriptures,

cures, he resolves it into this, *because they hear-* *Ibid. p. 16.*  
*ed not unto the inward Voice and Testimony of the* *P. 17.*  
*Father concerning him.* Again, he speaks of a  
 Word in the Heart, and of the inward Testimo-  
 ny of the Spirit. Again, *He writes them a living*  
*Copy in their Hearts.* Again, he talks of immedi- *Pag. 18.*  
*ate Teaching* of the Spirit, and of *Preaching* that  
 comes immediately from the Spirit. He says *Pag. 28.*  
 further, that this saving Spiritual Light, is the  
 Gospel Preach'd in every Creature under Hea- *Apology,*  
 ven. And that tho the outward Declaration of *P. 349.*  
 the Gospel be taken sometimes for the Gospel,  
 yet it is but figuratively, and by a Metonymy.  
 For to speak properly, (says he,) the Gospel is  
 this inward Power and Life, which preaches glad  
 Tidings in the Hearts of all Men, &c. More ex-  
 pressly yet, Mr. *Barclay* calls the Revelation of  
 the Light, the Voice of God inwardly speaking  
 to the Mind of Man; and in this he makes the  
 very form of Revelation to consist. And Mr  
*Keith* makes the Divine Light to be all one with  
 the Divine Voice and Call; and to this he applies  
 that of the Twenty Ninth Psalm, *The Voice of*  
*the Lord is a Glorious Voice.* And to this purpose  
 'tis usual with them to apply that of the Prophet  
*Habakkuk, I will stand upon my Watch, and set me*  
*upon the Tower, and will watch to see what he will*  
*say unto me,* Hab. 2. 1. And that of the Psalmist,  
*I will hear what God the Lord will Speak,* Psal. 85. 8.  
 All which Passages do plainly enough imply,  
 that they represent the Direction of the Light af-  
 ter the manner of a determinate form'd Dictate  
 or Proposition formally and expressly tutoring  
 and instructing them. And Mr. *Vickris* himself  
 acknowledges as much in the Words immediate-

*Possibility*  
*and necessity*  
*of in-*  
*ward im-*  
*mediate*  
*Revelation,*  
*p. 896.*  
*Way to the*  
*City of God,*  
*p. 163.*  
*Pag. 170.*

ly following his Question, when he says that the Quakers believe, the Light of Christ within to be God's Divine Oracle of Wisdom in the Soul, the Former, Dictator and Determiner of Heavenly Propositions, them directing and instructing what to choose, and what to refuse. Which how it differs from my Account, that they make it a determinate form'd Dictate or Proposition expressly directing and instructing them to do so or so, I confess my Eye-sight too weak to distinguish. But if Mr. *Vickris* be as good at finding out *Differences*, as he is at finding out *Likenesses*, perhaps he may be able to distinguish them.

As to what he says concerning the Light's not always actually operating upon the Understanding, because the Organ of Perception may be sometimes indisposed, he does not therein at all contradict me, who tho I make the Light to be common to all Men, even as to the act of Illumination in some degree or other, ( enough to render and denominate them Rational Creatures, ) yet am far enough from supposing with *Descartes*, that the Soul does at all times actually *think*. His Principle indeed obliges him so to suppose, because he makes actual Cogitation to be of the very Essence of the Soul, as much as Extension is of the Essence of Matter. But my Principle does not any way oblige me to the like supposition; nor do I suppose that the Soul is in every instant actually enlighten'd, or ( in other words ) that she does always actually *think*. 'Tis plain she does not, as in the case of Infants in the Womb, and of Maturer Persons when in a deep Sleep. Herein therefore Mr. *Vickris* does not at all contradict me, who agree with him as to this Point,

that

that the Soul is not always in actual Illumination. But tho in this he does not contradict *me*, yet he very foully and grossly contradicts *himself*, in making at the same time the Presence of the Light to the Understanding, to *imply* its Operation upon it; when according to his Principles he must acknowledge the Light to be ever present with the Soul: And if always present, then according to him it must always operate, since the Presence implies the Operation, wherein he plainly contradicts himself. As he does again afterwards, when he taxes me of Contradiction and Inconsistency, in supposing the Light always present to my Understanding, and intimately united with it; and yet that it does not formally enlighten it, but when attended to and consulted. This he says, discovers a Contradiction in it self, and to the formal reason of its Being and Presence, and Sufficiency in the one act of the same Principle; as well as to the state and nature of Intimate Union. For how can any thing, says he, be intimately united to its Principle, and not partake of its Nature and Influences, which is the reason and manner of its Union? In all which, he still proceeds upon his former Supposition, that the Presence and Union of the Divine Light with the Soul, does necessarily imply and infer its operation upon it. And since upon the Principles of Quakerism 'tis acknowledg'd, and by Mr. *Vickris* himself in this very exception openly confess'd, that the Light is always present; ( for says he expressly, *that this Divine Light is always in some degree and measure present in the Soul, the Quakers believe* ; ) this plainly contradicts what he had laid down before, that



the Light does not always operate upon the Understanding, and that to say that it does, is more than can safely be said. Why more than can safely be said, if the Divine Light be always present to the Soul; and if the Presence of the Light does necessarily infer its actual Operation? I may ask here of him in his own Words, *Is not this manifest Confusion?* Nay, is it not withal manifest Contradiction, and downright Inconsistency? If not, I will never pretend to judge of a Contradiction again.

As to the Contradiction, he would fain fasten upon me, because I suppose the Light always present, and yet not actually to enlighten but when attended, 'tis evident that it is of no force, unless I had held the same Principle with him, that the bare Presence of the Light does infer its actual Operation on the Soul; and then indeed I had been guilty of Contradiction, as he plainly is. But I do not acknowledge the truth of that Principle, that the bare Presence of the Light does of it self infer its actual Operation, and that for the same reason he himself has provided ready to my Hands, *viz.* because the *Organ* of Perception may be *indisposed*. There must concur the Disposition of the Organ as well as the Presence of the Light. Among which Dispositions, the most immediate is *Attention*, which I therefore make necessary to actual Illumination, not intending thereby to deny the Universality of actual Illumination, but only to specify and determine the manner of it, supposing at the same time, that all Men do attend in some measure or other, tho not at all times, or in every instant of their Lives.

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Now as to those Texts of Scripture he insists upon, to prove that our Illumination is not by Attention, because the Grace of God prevents Man's turning to him, which I think is the short of what he deduces in many Words. To this I return this double Answer, 1. That if there be any force in this Argument, it falls as heavy upon themselves as upon me, because ( as 'tis well known ) they also make turning to the Light, which is the very same with my Attention, to be a necessary requisite to actual Illumination. 2. That there is no force in the Argument; for the word *Turning* here is Equivocal, and may signify either the Moral Conversion of the Will to Holiness and Righteousness, which is the fruit of true Illumination, or that Simple Conversion of the Understanding to the Light of God, which is the cause of it. If the former, then I grant that the Grace of God does Inlighten Man, before Man can turn to him; that is, a Man is first Inlightened before he is Converted. But if the latter, I deny that God does Inlighten Man, before Man turns to him; nor do the Texts cited by him prove it. Man must first Convert himself to the Divine Light, and attend it, before he can be inlightened by it: For 'tis by Man's Attention to the Light, that the Light has any actual Influence upon his Mind. Nor is this any derogation to the Grace of God, to say that Attention is on Man's part a prerequisite Condition to Illumination, because 'tis by the Grace of God that he is first moved and enabled to attend. For the work of Divine Grace does not ( as Mr. *Vickris* seems to fancy ) consist in this, in Inlightning Man without his Attending, but

but in ingaging and inciting him to Attend, which since I acknowledge, I may without any derogation to the Grace of God say, that Man must Attend, before he can be Inlightned; or that without Attention, there is no Illumination. As suppose I should say, ( what is commonly presumed as true in Moral Discourses, ) that *Consideration is the Principle of Repentance*, I do not thereby either exclude or prejudice the Grace of God, because 'tis by the Motions of that, that the Man is brought to consider. And now I think I have answered all that is Material in this Fifth Exception.

*Exception against the Sixth Article.*

**T**HY Sixth and Last Section, I take to be an extravagant Noise and Bluster against the Quakers, to supply the want of real matter of Objection. What means else so great and general Reflections, without offering any proof, or reducing it to a particular Charge? To say the Quakers do not offer any rational or intelligible account of their Light within, proves nothing. To tell the World as thou dost, they Cant in some loose and general Expressions about the Light, does little else but impose upon trust, which is to beg Credit, whilst thou mentionest not what those loose and general Expressions are. But to say they confirm them by the Authority of St. John's Gospel, is in some sort to contradict thy Assertion; for so to confirm them, argues they agree to what is there taught, &c.

*The Answer.*

**I**N the Sixth and Last Article against which he now excepts, I had charged the Quakers with not offering any rational or intelligible account of their Light within, neither as to the *Thing*, nor as to the *Mode*, which I then thought, and do still, to be altogether unprincipled and unphilosophical. Now this he is pleased to call Noise and Bluster, and complains of it as a general Charge without any Proof. 'Tis true, I did not prove it then, not because I distrusted my ability to do so, but because it would have engaged me upon a Subject too large for my undertaking at that time, which was only to point out in short those principal Heads of Difference which distinguish'd my notion of the Divine Light within, from that of the Quakers. But since he is pleased to call upon me for a Proof of this now, I will be so civil as to give it him, tho I believe he will find occasion by that time I have done, to wish he had never put me upon this Undertaking. For I doubt not but that I am able to make my Words good, by shewing the Quakers Notion of the Light to be indeed unprincipled and unphilosophical. But because this is a general Charge, and such as concerns the intire Body of their *Hypothesis* concerning the Light, I shall not do it here, but shall rather refer it to a particular Treatise by it self, which I intend as an Appendix to this, under the Title of *The Grossness of the Quakers Notion of the Light within, with their Confusion and Inconsistency in explaining it*; which I suppose will be a full Answer to

to this last Exception. In which therefore I shall only further take notice for the present, of a pleasant fancy of our Author, in supposing that I make their Expressions about the Light, agreeable to what is taught in St. *John's* Gospel, because I say that they *confirm* them by that Authority. Whereas it is plain that I mean no more than that they alledge the Authority of St. *John's* Gospel for their Confirmation, which is the common sense of the Word *Confirm*, as it is used by the best *Latin* and *English* Authors. If Mr. *Vickris* does not know this, he is very Ignorant; if he does, he is very light and trifling.

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THE

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T H E  
G R O S S N E S S  
O F T H E  
Quaker's Principle  
O F T H E  
Light within ,  
WITH THEIR  
Inconsistency in Explaining it.

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D I S C O U R S ' D  
In a Letter to a Friend.

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*If the Light that is in thee be Darkness, how great is  
that Darkness ! Matth. 6. 23.*

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GROSSNESS

Quaker Principles

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WHAT you observe to me concerning the general Exultation and Triumph that is among the *Quakers* upon the late Publication of Mr. *Barclay's* Works in Folio, is what I can easily *believe*, and know not well how to *blame*. For I know of no Church or Society of Christians that is already so rich in Reputation for Great Men, but might well be proud of the Accession of so considerable a Writer, much more they who have hitherto been so barren in Productions of this kind, that instead of having many *Intelligent* Writers, they have had but few that are so much as *Intelligible*. We may therefore well allow the *Quakers* to swell and plume a little, when they have at once so *Rare* and so *Great* an Occasion for it. For really, *Sir*, Mr. *Barclay* is a very great Man, and were it not for that common Prejudice that lies against him, as being a *Quaker*, would be as sure not to fail of that Character in the World, as any of the finest Wits this Age has produced.

But to qualifie and allay their Joy, that they may not be overset with it, you suggest to me that it would be convenient if they were now a little taken down and humbled, to which I assent as a very proper and seasonable Undertaking, and withal as now worthy of the greatest of our Learned Pens. For I cannot forbear thinking *Quakerism* to be now considerable enough to deserve



serve an Opposition, and that if any of the Learned would with Credit and Reputation attempt the Confutation of it, now is their Time, now their loose and scatter'd Notions are reduced to Order and Method, and appear under the Form of a Regular and Artificial System, with all the Advantages that can be given them from a Scholastical Head, and a well-ordered Education. Now therefore there would be some Adventure in the Engagement, and Honour in the Conquest.

And thus far, Sir, I agree with you, thinking an Undertaking of this kind to be as proper and seasonable as any that the Juncture of the present Age can afford; I only dissent from you in the Choice of the *Undertaker*, who I doubt is not so well qualify'd for such a Work as you who are not so well acquainted with him as I, seem to imagin. However, since you are pleas'd to impose your Commands upon him, he is loath wholly to decline them even while he knows himself unable to perform them, but does so far prefer his Duty to his Reputation as to be willing to lead the way, and to flourish a little upon the Strings, in hopes that his awkward and artificial touching of them may provoke some more *Masterly* Hand to take up the Instrument.

By this, Sir, you may perceive that 'tis not my Design to examin the whole Body of Quakerism, which indeed would require more leisure and opportunity than the ordinary Business and particular Engagements of my Life will conveniently allow. I shall chuse rather to single out one of their most Capital and Fundamental Principles, and to expose the Grossness and Absurdity of it, and that is, their Famous Doctrin of  
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the *Light within*, which you know, Sir, to be the very Heart of their Cause, that Cardinal Point upon which the whole Weight of their System turns, the very Life and Soul of Quakerism.

I know very well, nor can you, I suppose, be ignorant, that this Principle of theirs, since its first appearance in the World, has been all along entertain'd with Laughter and Contempt; and tho by themselves the most regarded of any, (for there is no Point of theirs upon which they lay so much Stress as upon this ) has yet by others been most of all vilified and ridiculed, and has contributed the most of any one thing to that great and general Contempt they lie under, next to the particular Oddness of their Habit and Ayr, and the Uncourtlines of their Language and Behaviour.

Nor is there any thing either strange or amiss thus far. For certainly this Notion of the Light within, according as the Quakers explain and represent it, is really ridiculous enough to make the Patrons of it so, and well deserves the Scorn and Contempt that is cast upon it. But that which I particularly observe as blameable in this matter, is this, that the generality of those who deride the Doctrin of the Light within, know not upon what Grounds they do it; nay, for the most part, they do it upon no other Grounds, than barely to indulge the humerous Inclinations of a certain light and wanton Spirit that loves to disparage and run down all novel and singular Opinions, especially if they carry in them an Ayr of Seriousness or Religion. And of those few that proceed by more certain Grounds and Measures of Judgment, the greatest part proceed

by false and undue ones, condemning the Doctrin of the Light within not as 'tis held and represented by the *Quakers*, ( for to my Knowledg very few even of the Learned have given themselves the Curiosity to know how they hold it ) but in *Gross*, and in *General*. They condemn the Doctrin not as so or so stated, but in common, and as such, in its most direct and immediate Sense, thinking it absurd to suppose that there is any other Principle of Light in Man besides his Rational Soul, which they will have to be a Light to it self, at least as far as concerns Natural and Moral Truths.

Now herein I confess I am so far from agreeing with these Gentlemen of the Second Order ( for the former are of no account ) that I think they do very ill in deriding and ridiculing this Doctrin of the Light within in general and as such, and are guilty of more Impiety and Profaneness than they are aware of. For upon the deepest Consideration of all the possible ways of Human Understanding I am thoroughly perswaded, ( and have partly shewn the Grounds of this my Perswasion elsewhere ) that Man cannot be his own Light, or a Light to himself in the acquirement of Knowledg, and therefore that there must of necessity be some other Principle of Light in him distinct from his own Rational Nature ; which you know I make to be the *Divine Ideas*, the Eternal  $\alpha\gamma\omega$ , the Substantial Word and Wisdom of God, in whom I suppose Man to perceive all that he perceives. I am therefore so far from disallowing or condemning the Doctrin of the Light within, that I very earnestly stand and contend for it, as for a ve-

ry true, solid and necessary Notion, without which there can be no intelligible Account given of the Mode of Understanding. I am therefore so far from taxing the Quakers for the general Supposition they go upon, that I heartily joyn with them in it, supposing, as they do, that *Man cannot be a Light to himself*; only I adhere more closely to this Supposition than they do. For when they make Man incapable of being a Light to himself, they mean, not as to *Natural* things, ( which according to them may be discern'd by a Natural Light ) but only as to *Spiritual* things, which cannot be discern'd but by an Higher Principle. Whereas I acknowledg the Supposition in a greater Latitude, supposing Man incapable of being a Light to himself, not only with respect to Spiritual Truths, but even as to Natural things, all which are discern'd by that one common Light of Man, the *Divine Light*, which I make to be necessary not only to the Discernment of Divine and Spiritual Truths, but even to the Natural and Ordinary Acts of Understanding.

I do not therefore find Fault with the Quakers for holding such a thing as the *Light within*; so far from that, that I very much out-do them in the Latitude of the Principle, as making it more necessary, and more extensive than they. I do not ( as some do ) disapprove of the Doctrin in general, but have a very convincing Assurance of it, and a very awful Regard and Veneration for it, as a very Noble and Sacred Theory. But that which I condemn in the Quakers as to this Point, is their particular manner of stating and explaining the general Notion of the *Light with-*

in, which I think to be as Gross and Absurd, as the Notion it self in general is fine and rational. And that upon this double Account.

I. Because they make it to be a Creature.

II. Because they make it a Material Creature.

Upon which two Grounds I question not but that I shall be able so to demonstrate the Falseness and Absurdity of this grand Article of Quakerism, as to render it utterly incapable of Defence, even tho Mr. Barclay himself were now alive to be my Opposer.

But because this is to be the Ground and Bottom of the following Discourse, and that I may not bethought to contend against a Supposititious Notion, or Imaginary Absurdity, I must take care in the first place, that this, which is to be the Foundation of all, be well laid, by proving plainly and undeniably that the Quakers do represent their Light within after the manner already intimated, viz. As a *Creature*, and as a *Material Creature*, before I undertake to expose their Absurdity in so doing. In order to which I must give an Account of this Light within, and shew what it is according to the Quakers. Wherein I believe (so little have the Principles of Quakerism been enquired into, even by those that nevertheless take the liberty to laugh at them) I shall tell a great many even of the Learned World a considerable piece of News.

And here to reduce the matter to as narrow a Compass as may be, (there being nothing wherein I admire Brevity more than in *Quotations*) I shall be content to take my Account from two of their most eminent and approved Writers, Mr. Barclay and Mr. Keith; and to prevent

vent all suspicion of Misrepresentation, shall deliver it in their own exprefs Words. Thus then Mr. Barclay, speaking of the Universal and Saving Light of Christ, *By this Seed, Grace and Word of God, and Light wherewith we say every Man is enlightned, and hath a measure of it, which strives with them in Order to save them, and which may by the Stubbornness and Wickedness of Man's Will be quenched, bruised, wounded, pressed down, slain and crucified, we understand not the proper Essence and Nature of God precisely taken; which is not divisible into Parts and Measures, as being a most pure simple Being, void of all Composition or Division, and therefore can neither be resisted, hurt, wounded, crucified or slain by all the Efforts and Strength of Men. But we understand a Spiritual, Heavenly, and Invisible Principle, in which God, as Father, Son and Spirit dwells: A measure of which Divine and Glorious Life is in all Men as a Seed, which of its own Nature draws, invites and inclines to God. And this we call Vehiculum Dei, or the Spiritual Body of Christ, the Flesh and Blood of Christ, which came down from Heaven, of which all the Saints do feed, and are thereby nourish'd unto Eternal Life.*

From which Account of Mr. Barclay it is plain,  
 1. That they do not make their Light wit' in to be God, (for he says they understand not by it the proper Essence and Nature of God) and consequently must make it to be a *Creature*, there being no Medium between God and the Creature.  
 2. That they do also make it to be a *Material* Creature, since he supposes it divisible into Measures and Portions, calls it *Vehiculum Dei*, and the Spiritual Body of Christ, and that Flesh and Blood of his which came down from Hea-

Apology,  
P 494.

Page 495.

Ibid.

ven, and which is both Food and Nourishment to the Saints. None of which Affections can with any tolerable Congruity agree to a Spiritual Substance, strictly so call'd. Again, says Mr. Barclay, discoursing of the Communion or Participation of the Body and Blood of Christ, *The Body then of Christ which Believers partake of, is Spiritual, and not Carnal, and his Blood which they drink of is Pure and Heavenly, and not Human or Elementary. If it be asked, what that Body, what that Flesh and Blood is? I answer, it is that Heavenly Seed, that Divine, Spiritual, Celestial Substance of which we spake before in the 5th and 6th Propositions; ( the place just before quoted ) This is that Vehiculum Dei, or Spiritual Body of Christ, whereby and where-through he communicateth Life to Men, and Salvation to as many as believe in him, and receive him, and whereby also Man comes to have Fellowship and Communion with God.* Again, says he, *That this Body and Spiritual Flesh and Blood of Christ is to be understood of that Divine and Heavenly Seed before spoken of by us, appears both by the Nature and Fruits of it.* And again, *That Christ understands the same thing here by his Body, Flesh and Blood, which is understood, John i. By the Light enlightning every Man, appears, &c.* Again, *As Jesus Christ did by the Eternal Spirit offer up that Body, ( meaning his Carnal Body ) for a Propitiation for the Remission of Sins, so hath he likewise poured forth into the Hearts of all Men a measure of that Divine Light and Seed wherewith he is cloathed, &c.* I shall quote but one Passage more from Mr. Barclay to this purpose, and 'tis in his last Discourse concerning the Possibility and Necessity of inward Immediate Revelation, where

where having distinguish'd between Natural and Supernatural Ideas, he says, *As the Natural Ideas are stirr'd up in us by outward and natural Bodies, so those Divine and Supernatural Ideas are stirr'd up in us by a certain Principle, which is a Body in Naturals, in relation to the Spiritual World, and therefore may be call'd a Divine Body. Not as if it were a part of God, who is a most pure Spirit; but the Organ or Instrument of God, by which he worketh in us, and stirreth up in us these Ideas of Divine things, This is that Flesh and Blood of Christ, by which the Saints are nourish'd, which is a Mystery to all unregenerated and meer natural men, &c.* Pag. 501.

Here we meet with a Continuation of the same Notion. For as in the former Instances he made the Light to be all one with the Spiritual Body of Christ, and again reciprocally the Spiritual Body of Christ to be the self-same thing with the Light, so now supposing our Spiritual Ideas to be raised by a Divine Body, he makes this Divine Body to be no other than that Flesh and Blood of Christ by which the Saints are nourish'd, and which he had before made all one with the Light, and consequently he makes the Light to be a Divine Body. For if the Light be the same with that Flesh and Blood of Christ by which the Saints are nourish'd; and if that Flesh and Blood be a Divine Body, then 'tis plain that the Light is also a Divine Body.

So much at present for Mr. Barclay. Now let Mr. Keith take his turn, who in his Way to the City of God, speaking of the Divine Seed ( which they always make one and the same with the Light ) says, *That it is call'd in Scripture the Body of Christ, and his Flesh and Blood, which the* Pag. 64.



Ibid.

Pag. 130.

Soul feeding upon becomes cloath'd therewith, as with a Body, and thereby dwelleth in Christ, and liveth in him, as the Branch in the Vine. Again, The Saints feel it ( namely the Divine Seed or Light ) in them as really to be a Part or Particle of the very Substance of Heaven, viz. Of that Spiritual and Invisible Heaven where the Saints live, as they do feel the Body of their outward Man to be a Part or Particle of the Substance of this outward World. Again he says, that this Divine Seed ( or Light ) is not the Godhead it self, but a certain middle Nature, Substance or Being, betwixt the Godhead and Mankind, &c. This will be thought the more strange ( says he ) by many, because they have been commonly taught, and have commonly received it, that there is no middle Substance betwixt the Godhead and us, at least as to the inward : For they have supposed that the Spirit or Mind of a Man or an Angel is next unto the Godhead, which I deny; for the Heavenly or Divine Substance or Essence of which the Divine Birth was both conceiv'd in Mary, and is inwardly conceiv'd in the Saints, is of a middle Nature.

Ibid.

And lest by their Calling ( as they often do ) this Substance a Divine Substance, they should be thought to imply that it was the very Substance of God, he takes care to lay in a Caution against any such Construction in the next Paragraph. This middle Nature ( says he ) I call a Divine Substance or Essence, not as if it were the Godhead it self, or a Particle or Portion of it, but because of its Excellency above all other things next unto the Godhead ; as on such an Account Men do call other things Divine which are very excellent; yea, some call Holy Men Divine, and some call these who teach the things of God, Divines, as John, who

wrote

wrote the Revelations, is call'd John the Divine. Also this excellent and intermediate Being may be call'd the Divine Being, because the Godhead is most immediately manifest therein, and dwelleth in it as in the most Holy Place, or Holy of Holies.

He further tells us, speaking of the Conception of the Virgin Mary, that God did really sow a *most Divine and Heavenly Seed in the Virgins Womb,* Pag. 129.

and that by Vertue of this, *Christ had a Divine* p. 132.

*Perfection and Vertue, and that Substantial, above all other Men.* Again, he says, that his Body *hath not only the Perfections of our Body, but also* p. 133.

*much more, because of its being generate not only of the Seed of Mary, but of a Divine Seed, and that* Ibid.

*this Divine Seed is that Universal Balsom or Medicine to cure and restore not only all Mankind, but also the whole outward Creation : That this is the Little* Pag. 134.

*Leaven that shall Leaven the whole Lump of this visible Creation, whereby all things shall be made new, &c. That this is that Stone of the Wise Men,* Ibid.

*which by its Touch shall in due time change, not only the Bodies of the Saints, but the Body of the whole Creation, and purge it from all its Weakness and Impurity.* For ( says he ) *what can perfectly cure* Ibid.

*and restore the Sick and Diseased Body of Nature either in Man, or in other things, but his incorruptible Body ? &c. All which Expressions do plainly intimate,*

that this Divine Seed whereof Christ was generated, and we are regenerated, ( for according to them, that which was the Principle of Christ's Natural Birth, is the Principle of our Spiritual Birth ) was really a material corporeal Substance ; and since the Light is by them supposed to be all one with this Divine Seed, it is very evident that they make the Light to be also

to a material corporeal Principle. The short of this matter lies in this Form of Argument.

The Divine Seed whereof Christ was naturally generated, and whereby we are regenerated, is a Body.

But the Light within is one and the same thing with this Divine Seed.

Therefore the Light within is a Body.

And thus do these two great Pillars of Quakerism Mr. *Barclay* and Mr. *Keith* agree with each other, and both of them in this, in making the Light within not to be God, or a Substance properly Divine, but to be a Creature, and more than that, to be a Material and Corporeal Creature.

But that the Reader may have yet a more full Account, and more clear and exact Comprehension of this matter, I will take their Hypothesis from the very Ground and Bottom of it, and resolve it into certain distinct Principles or Suppositions, which (as far as I am able to gather from the forecited and other like Passages that occur up and down in their Writings) are such as these.

1. They suppose that the Spiritual Life, or the Life of Holiness and Grace, is a Substantial Life, even as the Life of Vegetation, the Life of Sensation, and the Life of Reason are all Substantial.

2. They suppose that this Substantial Life is by the Vital Union of the Soul with some Body or other.

3. They suppose that this Body in the Vital Union of the Soul with which Spiritual Life does consist, is a certain *Divine* or *Celestial* Body,  
even

even as the Natural Life does consist in the Vital Union of the Soul, with a *Natural* or *Terrestrial* Body of the common Elementary consistence.

4. They suppose that Christ had Two Bodies of a distinct Original, and of a different Texture, a Carnal Body, and a Spiritual Body, a Body which he took from the Virgin *Mary*, and a Body in which his Soul existed long before he took Flesh of the Virgin. They are the very Words of Mr. *Barclay*, which because they are of particular concernment, I will set down at large. To the Question of his Adversary, Had Christ Two Bodies? He answers, *Yes; and let him deny it if he dare, without contradicting the Scripture, Joh. 6. 58. Christ speaks of his Flesh which came down from Heaven; but this was not the Flesh he took from the Virgin Mary, for that came not down from Heaven; but he had a Spiritual Body, in which his Soul existed long before he took Flesh of the Virgin.* Which I think is an express Declaration for a Twofold Body of Christ, the Body wherein he was Incarnate, and a Body antecedent to his Incarnation.

*Apology  
vindicated,  
p. 861.*

5. They suppose that this latter, the Spiritual Body of Christ, is that Divine or Celestial Body in the Vital Union of the Soul, with which our Spiritual Life, or our Life of Grace does consist; that this is properly that Seed of God mention'd by St. *Peter* and St. *John*, which was sown in the Womb of the Virgin, and in the Hearts of Mankind, that whereby Christ was naturally generated, and whereby the Saints are regenerated; that this is that Heavenly Manna, that Living Bread discours'd of in the Sixth of St.

*John,*

*John*, that Divine Aliment upon which the Saints do feed, and whereby they are nourish'd unto everlasting Life.

6. And Lastly, they do also suppose that this Spiritual Body of Christ wherein his Human Soul existed before his Incarnation, a measure whereof is given as a Divine Seed to every Man to Live, Season and Sanctifie his Nature, and by closing and uniting with which our Nature becomes actually Sanctified, that this I say is that very *Divine Light* which God has set up as a Monitor, Instructor and Teacher in the Hearts of Men, to guide and direct them in the way of Salvation : That this Spiritual Body of Christ, is what they suppose to be the Light of Mankind, I need appeal to no other Evidence than the latter part of the first Quotation out of Mr. Barclay, where he says that they understand by the Light, *a Spiritual, Heavenly and invincible Principle, in which God as Father Son and Spirit dwells, a measure of which Divine and Glorious Life is in all Men as a Seed, which of its own nature draws, invites and inclines to God. And this we call ( observe ) Vehiculum Dei, or the Spiritual Body of Christ, the Flesh and Blood of Christ which came down from Heaven, of which all the Saints do Feed, and are thereby nourished unto Eternal Life.* By which I think it is plain as far as Mens meanings may be gather'd from their Words, that they make the Light within to be the Spiritual Body of Christ, or a certain measure or Portion of that Body.

And thus having according to the best of my Understanding and Observation given an Extract of the Quakers Principle concerning the  
Light

Light within, ( which I have so well consider'd both before and after the framing it, that I can with good assurance stand by it, and dare appeal to all the Learned of that way, whether I have not given a true and just account of their Principle. ) I now hasten to the Second part of my Undertaking, to expose the Grossness and Absurdity of it.

And here in the first place, I shall be so free and ingenuous, as to declare that I shall not stand with them concerning any of the Five First Propositions, which may be all true for ought I know to the contrary. Particularly I shall not stand with them concerning the *Spiritual Body* of Christ, as distinct from that Natural Body, wherein he was incarnate of the Virgin *Mary*: There may be such a thing for ought I know, or am able to shew to the contrary, and I know that several among the *Ancients* have been of this Opinion, alledging for its Foundation the Sixth Chapter of *St. John*, which to confess the truth, seems to favour it not a little. And this Hypothesis has been of late to the great surprize and amusement of the stiffer and severer sort of Divines, readvanc'd by a Person of singular note and eminence in our Church, who makes use of it to solve and maintain the Doctrin of the *Real Presence*, supposing that while the Bodies of the Communicants feed upon the grosser Elements of Bread and Wine, their Souls ( as many of them as are fitly disposed ) do take in and feed upon this Divine and Spiritual Body of Christ, which strengthens and nourishes their *Inner Man*, and becomes to them a Principle of Regeneration and Spiritual Life, as you may see more fully

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deduc'd in his Discourse of the Real Presence, particularly in the First and Sixth Chapters of that Treatise.

I shall not therefore, I say, contend with them concerning the Spiritual Body of Christ, either as to its Existence, or as to this its use, whether there be such a thing, or whether it be the Principle of Regeneration and Spiritual Life to the Saints : They may be both true for ought I know, I see nothing absurd or so much as improbable in them ; and as I do not surrender up my full Assent to what I cannot demonstrate to be *True*, so neither do I care to run down and condemn such Principles which I cannot Prove to be *false*. But that which I dislike, and condemn here, is their making this Spiritual Body of Christ to be the *Light within*, that Light which is to teach Man Wisdom and Knowledge, and to be his constant Tutor, Monitor and Director; which notion of the Light within ( notwithstanding that I highly approve of the thing it self ) I take to be extreamly gross and absurd, and that upon those Two Accounts before touch'd upon.

1. Because hereby they make it to be a Creature.

2. Because they make it a Material Creature.

That they do make the Light to be a Creature, and a Material Creature, is sufficiently shewn already, in the account that I have given of their notion concerning it. I am now only to lay open the absurdity of this.

And First, 'tis absurd to make the Light within to be a *Creature*. Monsieur *Malebranche*

con-

sidering with himself of all the possible ways De inqui-  
 whereby we may come to have the Ideas of rend. Ve-  
 things without us, makes this Division or Enu- ritat. p. 158.  
 meration of them. *It is necessary (says he) that*  
*these Ideas should either proceed from the Objects, or*  
*that our Mind has a power of producing them; or*  
*that God should produce them, either with the Mind*  
*when he Creates it, or occasionally, as often as we*  
*think of any Object. Or that the Mind should pos-*  
*sess in it self all the Perfections which it sees in things.*  
*Or else lastly, that it be united to some Absolutely Per-*  
*fect Being, that includes in himself all the Perfections*  
*of Created Beings.* And these are all the possible  
 ways of Human Understanding that this excel-  
 lent Theorist could conceive, or thought con-  
 ceivable. But this 'tis to have a dull Invention,  
 and a straitness of Imagination, that is not open  
 enough to let in a full view of things. We now  
 meet with a sort of Philosophers of a freer Pros-  
 pect, and more enlarged Survey, that have  
 found out another mode of furnishing the Mind  
 with Ideas, and that is, by its being united  
 to some *Created Being*, and that too a *Ma-*  
*terial* one. Strange, that so inquisitive and so  
 working a Head as that of M. *Malebranche* should  
 be so defective in his Enumeration, as not to hit  
 upon this most wonderful Expedient of uniting  
 the Soul to a *Creature*, in order to its Illumi-  
 nation! But sure he could not overlook it, but ra-  
 ther thought it too inconsiderable to be menti-  
 on'd. 'Twas no doubt very easie and obvious  
 for him to have consider'd, that the last Member  
 of his Distribution might have been divided in-  
 to Two, only by making his Supposition run first  
 in general, *that the Mind be united to some Being*  
 or



or other, and then by distinguishing that general into *Created* or *Increated*. This I say he might easily have done; and in point of exact order and Method, perhaps should have done; but not dreaming that any would ever be so extravagantly gross, as to resolve the Illumination of the Mind into its union with any *Creature*, and not in the least questioning but that if Men were once come so far into the right path, as to make the Illumination of the Mind to depend upon its Union with some Being or other, they would have no further scruple upon them whether this Being were God or no, he chose rather to pass over all union with the Creature in Silence, and to make this his last and only further supposable way of inlightning the Mind, *that it be united to some absolutely perfect Being that includes in himself all the Perfections of Created Beings*. Which no doubt is the only Basis upon which an Intelligible Hypothesis of Human Understanding can ever be raised. And I cannot but greatly wonder that those who come up so very near it, should yet upon a suddain turn off, and pass it by.

The *Quakers* seem with M. *Malebranche* to disclaim and renounce the Four First of the ways proposed, and they agree with him so far in the Fifth and Last, as to resolve the Illumination of the Soul into its Union with some Being or other. But herein they divide and take several ways, in that M. *Malebranche*, makes this Being to be God, who is absolutely Perfect and all-comprehensive, eminently and virtually all; and the *Quakers* will needs have it to be a *Created* Being. Which Hypothesis I think to be very Absurd.

1. As needless.
2. As impossible.

*It is a needless Hypothesis :* For if the Soul of Man be not sufficient to be a Light to it self, but its Illumination must be resolv'd into its union with some other Being ( which these Men implicitly grant when they resolve it into its Union with a *Created* Being, ) then what Being so fit and proper for this purpose as God, who by reason of the Immenity and Spirituality of his Nature, must needs be intimately present to all Minds, and by reason of the Infinity of his Essential Perfection, must needs have in himself after an eminent and intelligible manner, all the Degrees of Being, and consequently the Ideas of all things : If there be a Being so qualified, certainly our Illumination must be resolv'd into our Union with that Being : And if there be a God, then there must be a Being so qualified. And therefore it must be from our Union with him that all our Light and Knowledge is derived, who would of himself sufficiently enlighten Man, not only without the *Conjunction*, but even without the *Copexistence* of any other Creature.

For I would demand of these Men that contend for a *Created* Light, an Answer to this one Question : Suppose God should annihilate all the whole Creation except one Intelligent Spirit, so that there should be nothing in being but that single Spirit and Himself, would this Spirit upon the removal of all his Fellow Creatures out of being, cease to understand or no ? I know upon their Principle they must say that he would, as supposing his capacity of Knowledge to depend upon his Union with a certain *Created* Being, viz. the *Spiritual Body of Christ* : But setting aside their Principle, (which is the thing under Question,

tion, and therefore must not be used as a Medium to prove another thing by, ) I see no reason in the nature of the thing it self, why they should say that such a Spirit would in such a Supposition cease to understand; and I think there is all the reason in the World to suppose he would not, as being still notwithstanding this great and Universal Emptiness, united most intimately to a Being of Absolute and Infinite Perfection, and that contains in himself the Ideas of all things. Certainly this great and universal *Representative* would be a sufficient Light to that *Solitary Spirit*, who would not want Thoughts or Ideas, tho he might want a Companion to Communicate them to. And therefore tho the Notion were otherwise never so possible and consistent, yet it is altogether needless to seek out for Union with any Creature, in order to that Illumination, which considering the Omnipresence and All-perfection of God, must needs be supposed, tho there were no other Creature besides one Intelligent Spirit in being. But as this is needless, so

2. *It is also an impossible Hypothesis*: It is absolutely impossible, that a Creature should be a Light to Man, or that one Creature should be a Light to another. God is the great *Luminary* of the whole Intellectual World, and 'tis he only that can be a Light either to the Soul of Man, or to any other Intelligent Being. No Creature, tho never so glorious and excellent, not even the Human Soul of Jesus Christ, ( much less his Spiritual Body, ) can ever be a Light to the Mind of Man. For to be a Light to the Mind, is to be to it the Principle of Understanding, to furnish it with *Ideas*, and to be the formal and

imme-

immediate Object of its Conception. And for this there are Two Conditions necessarily required, First, That it be intimately present and united to the Mind. Secondly, That it have the whole Perfection of Being, so as to have the Ideas of all things, and to be an Universal Representative. Which Conditions, (especially the last,) no Creature either has, or can possibly have: And therefore no Creature is able to be a Light to the Soul of Man.

Were a Creature never so excellent, yet it would be of a finite Perfection, and consequently of such a certain determinate order, rank, kind or species; that is, it would be such a particular degree of Being. It would not be all Being, or Being at large, ( for then it would be God; ) but only such a definite and determinate degree of it. And consequently were it never so intimately united to my Mind, it could be able to represent only it self, and such degrees of being as were in it self. That is, it might represent it self and all that is of the same kind with it self, but it could not represent any thing else, for it could not represent more degrees of Being than it had. It could not therefore represent any Creature of another Order from it self, as a *Sun* suppose could not represent a *Tree*, nor a *Triangle* a *Circle*, since each of these have degrees of Being that are not in the other, and consequently cannot be represented by the other. For this is a most undoubted Principle, that nothing can represent any more degrees of Being than it has. Suppose your Creature therefore of never so raised and excellent an Order, it would be able to represent only it self, and those

of the same Species. And what a poor account would this turn to ! What a dim *Wooring* Light would this be for a Rational Soul to see by !

And as such a Created Light would represent but little of the Creation, so it would not be able to represent God at all, whom we are chiefly concern'd to know, if 'twere only that we might be ascertain'd of the Truth of other things, the certainty of which ( as *Descartes* has well observ'd and proved, depends upon our knowledge of God. But now it is impossible that God should be represented to our Minds by a Created Light ; for as there must be at least as much Reality in the Object, either formally or eminently, as there is of Objective Reality in the Idea, ( which is one of the Principles upon which *M. Descartes* grounds the existence of God, ) So 'tis as true on the other Hand, that there must be as much Reality in the Idea, as there is formally or eminently in the Object, or else that Idea will never be able to represent that Object, and that by vertue of the Principle before laid down, That nothing can represent any more degrees of Being than it has. But now God does infinitely surpass the whole Order of the Creatures, exceeding the highest degrees of them by a whole Infinity, and therefore cannot possibly be represented by any or all of them. God indeed may represent a Creature to my Mind, as having all the degrees of Being in that Creature, and infinitely more, but a Creature can never represent God, as having no manner of Proportion to his Excellency. For if ( as it has been shewn, one Creature cannot represent another, that has but one degree of Be-  
ing

ing beyond it, or which the other has not, as a Triangle cannot represent a Quadrangle, as having one Angle more than it self, much less can a Creature be a Representative of God, of whom it falls short by no less a measure than a whole Infinity. Take an Extract of all Created Perfection, and you will never be able to raise an Idea of God out of it ; for to add Creature to Creature, is but to add finite to finite ; and as that will never *make*, so neither will it be ever able to *represent* an Infinite. So much impossibility is there in the notion of a *Created Light*, which can represent but little of the Creature, and God not at all. And so very Absurd are those that stand for it, since the end for which they mainly design it, and suppose it to be afforded to Man, is to conduct him to God, of whom it seems it cannot give him so much as an Idea.

And now if it be so Absurd to make the Light within to be a Creature, then how much more Absurd is it to suppose it a *Material* Creature ?

*Aquinas* I remember proposes it as a Question, *Prim. Part. Quest. 106. Art. 1.*

Whether one Angel may not Illuminate another : But among the many trifling and frivolous Questions which he puts, I think he never thought it worth his while to inquire, whether a Clod of Earth, or a Sun-Beam ( if you please ) could illuminate an Angel ? He that thought an Inferior Angel could not illuminate an Angel of a Superior Order, to be sure did not imagine that it could ever enter into any considering Head, that Matter should be able to illuminate Spirit. And I cannot but stand amazed at the Extravagancy of their Imagination

*ibid. Art. 3.*

who think it can. Sure the wild disorders of a Fever, can hardly produce a more odd phantastical conceit than this. It has been thought a strange adventure in Speculation, to suppose, that Matter by the advantage of a finer Mechanism, should be made capable of *Thought*, and be able to reason and understand; and the truth is, I would give a great deal to see the *Mould* in which those Mens Heads were cast, who could entertain such a Notion. But alas, what is this in comparison of making Matter the *Principle of Illumination*! 'Tis gross enough of any sense to suppose Matter capable of thinking it self, but to suppose it to be an Intellectual Light, to be a Principle of thinking, to make it a Master and Instructor, a Furnisher of Thoughts and Ideas, what an Extravagance must this be! What, Matter illuminate Spirit! How harshly it sounds! How it grates upon a Philosophical Ear! For besides that such a Supposition as this would invert and confound the whole Order of things, by exalting Matter above Spirit ( which according to this must depend upon Matter for the noblest of its Operations, that very Operation whereby it is distinguish'd from it, and supposed to be placed above it, ) I say besides this, how is it possible that Matter should be a Principle of Illumination to the Soul? For in the first place, how shall we suppose it capable of being intimately united and present to it? Or if we could conceive this to be possible, yet what would it be able to represent? It would be able to represent nothing but what is Material, and but a little of that neither, even no more than those few degrees of Material Perfection it self is

sup-

supposed to have; it could represent nothing Immaterial or Intellectual. For its Ideas could be no other than certain Material Images or Figurations; and a Material Idea can never represent an Immaterial Object. A Principle so very clear and certain, that even those who derive our Ideas from Sensible Objects, supposing them to be Corporeal Emanations, do yet find it necessary to look out for an Expedient, whereby they may be refined and Spiritualized after their admission into the *common Sensory*, namely by the help of what they call *Intellectus Agens*, whose Office they say is to purify and refine these Material Phantasms, and to render them Immaterial, that so they may become Intelligible. A very hard Task for poor *Intellectus Agens*; and were he not a Creature of their own Brain, it would move any ones Pity to think what a piece of Drudgery he is Condemn'd to. But that puts an end to our concern; for so he that reads the many severe toils and hardships of a poor Romantick Adventurer, feels a secret warmth about his Heart, and is apt ever now and then out of a tenderness of Spirit, to dissolve into a passion for the Noble Sufferer, till as he is just about to drop a Tear, he remembers that 'tis but a *Romance*, and then all is well again. But by the way, this is a most miserable Device, and such as sufficiently betrays the absurdity and nullity of their *Hypothesis*. For hereby they plainly acknowledge the truth of this Principle, that a Material Idea cannot represent an Immaterial Object, (for otherwise, what necessity of having it Spiritualized,) and if so, then since their Ideas are Material, the whole weight



of their Hypothesis rests upon this single Bottom, *The Transmutability of Material into Immaterial Ideas*, which if found to be impossible, their Hypothesis can no longer stand. Now I must needs confess it does as much surpass my Understanding, how a Material Idea can be transform'd into an Immaterial one, as how a Material Idea can represent an Immaterial Object. They are alike Mysteries to me, and I doubt not but that they are both alike Absurdities in themselves.

Well then, the Sum of the matter in hand will come to this: If the Ideas of a Material Principle must be also Material, and if a material Idea cannot represent an Immaterial Object, then 'twill follow, that a Material Light will not be able to give the Soul a Representation of any thing that is Immaterial or Intellectual. And if so, what little stead will it serve us in! The greatest part of our Notions are Intellectual; We cannot speak or write three or four Words, but some of them will stand for Ideas that represent Intellectual Objects. There is no thinking nor conversing, tho never so little, without this. And what shall we do then with a Light that is not able to furnish us with Ideas for a quarter of the things we are concerned both to think and to discourse of? So utterly unserviceable and insufficient is a Material Light for the purposes of Human Understanding, and so senseless and absurd is the Notion that Asserts it. The Sum of what has been hitherto discours'd turns all within the Compass of this Syllogism.

That Notion which makes the Light within to be a Creature, and a material Creature, is Absurd.

But

But the Notion of the Quakers concerning the Light within makes it to be so.

Therefore the Notion of the Quakers concerning the Light within is Absurd.

The first of these Propositions is what we have been proving now last of all. The Second was proved in the Account given of the Quakers Principle of the Light. The Conclusion therefore follows, That the Quakers Principle of the Light within is Absurd. Which was the Proposition I undertook to prove, and I am very much mistaken in my Accounts if it be not well proved.

And thus having represented the Grossness of the Quakers Principle of the Light, I will now in the Conclusion add a Word or two concerning their Inconsistency in explaining it. That Person may well be esteemed Inconsistent with himself, who so explains this Hypothesis in the Particulars of it, as to contradict that general Ground upon which it is built. But now this I take to be the Fault of the Quakers in relation to the Point in Hand. The general Ground upon which they build their Hypothesis of the Light within, is this, That Man cannot be a Light to himself, ( for if he could, what need there be another Principle of Light within him ) and does therefore require some other Principle of Illumination for his Conduct and Direction. This is the Principle they go upon, and so far I think they are right enough. But now when they come to give a particular Account of their Hypothesis, they so order the matter as to contradict and give up again that General Principle. For if that Light within, which is to be the Per-

Perfections of his own Nature, the only Reason why Man cannot be a Light to himself being this, because no Creature can be so. But if a Creature may be a Light, and the Light within be that Creature, then why may not Man himself be that Creature, and then what need of any such thing as a Light within distinct from the Rational Nature of Man, which would be to renounce their general Principle, and to fall in with the Vulgar Hypothesis of Human Understanding. So that this is, a Notion altogether inconsistent with it self, as well as disagreeable to Truth.

I have now finish'd what I undertook, and, if I mistake not, fully answer'd the Title of this Treatise. If any should think it strange that I would be so far diverted from better Studies, as to spend time and pains in disproving the Principles of so inconsiderable a Persuasion as that of the *Quakers*, I must in answer to this take the Liberty to tell them,

1. That (as to better Studies) I know nothing that does better deserve the Consideration of a Rational Creature, than the Mode and Way of Human Understanding.
2. That (as to the Inconsiderableness of the Persuasion) I cannot think Quakerism to be so, as the Principles of it are laid down and managed by Mr. *Barclay*. That Great and General Contempt they lie under, does not hinder me from thinking the Sect of the Quakers to be by far the most considerable of any that divide from us, in case the Quakerism that is generally held be the same with that which Mr. *Barclay* has deliver'd to the World for such, whom I take to be so great a Man, that I profess to you freely, I

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ple of Human Understanding, be a *Creature*,  
 then Man might as well have been his own Light,  
 or a Light to himself, that is, he might arrive  
 to the knowledg of things, by consulting the  
 had rather engage against an Hundred *Bellarmins*,  
*Hardings*, or *Stapyltons*, than with one *Barclay*.

However, as great a Man as he is, I think I  
 have given his Principle of the Light a clear and  
 thorough Confutation, and have likewise there-  
 in sufficiently answer'd my particular *Adversary*,  
 who perhaps by this time may have reason to  
 repent that ever he set me to work. I know, Sir,  
 very well, that 'tis one thing to answer the *Book*,  
 and another thing to answer the *Man*: For some  
 Men will never be answered, tho' their Books  
 are. But I am not ambitious of the *last Word*,  
 because I know wise Men do not use to judg of  
 the issue of a Dispute by that Measure. Mr.  
*Fick* is therefore may have *that* if he please, and  
 the rather, because I think it will be all he is like  
 to get by his Engagement with

S I R,

Your Humble Servant,

J. N.

## POSTSCRIPT

S I R,

THERE is one very material Consideration  
 relating to the Impossibility of the Hypo-  
 thesis of a Created Light, which happen'd to es-  
 cape my Thoughts till I was past the place  
 where

where it ought naturally to have come in, and therefore I must set it down here by it self. You know, Sir, a very great Part of our Study and Thinking, as well as of our Familiar Discourse and Conversation, is employ'd about *Necessary* and *Eternal Truths*. And most of our Arts and Sciences are Conversant about them, as being indeed the Principal Object of Human Knowledge. And therefore it is necessary, that that which is to serve us as an Intellectual Light should be able to represent these things to our Minds, whatever else be left unrepresented. But now this is what a Created Light will never be able to do, there being nothing in a Created Light that is able to answer or bear any Correspondence to that which is Necessary and Eternal. For a Creature is a *Contingent* Being, all the Reality that is in it is wholly Contingent; and as Contingency can never represent Necessity or Eternity, so neither can that which is Contingent represent what is Necessary or Eternal. This I confess is a very Metaphysical Argument, and such as will require a great deal of Abstraction and Attention in him that will be Master of it. But if attentively weigh'd and consider'd, I believe it will be found to amount to no less than a *Demonstration*.

F I N I S

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SPIRITUAL COUNSEL:  
OR, THE  
Father's Advice  
TO HIS  
CHILDREN.

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*Hear ye Children the Instruction of a Father, and  
Attend to know Understanding, PROV. 4. 1.*

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SPIRITUAL COUNSEL

OR THE

FATHER'S ADVICE

TO HIS

CHILDREN.

THE SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND CORRECTED.

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## Advertisement.

**T**HIS little Manual of Spiritual Counsel, was at first undertaken and composed by the Author for the private Use of his own Children; but upon a Review, it being thought as useful to others as to them, he was induced to make it publick for the Common Good. And that the rather, partly because the Contents of these Papers (tho directed to his own Children) are of general Concernment, and such as are calculated for People of all Ages and Conditions; and partly for the greater Security of the Copy, which in a private Manuscript would be in great danger of being lost; but by being Printed would be better preserved for the use of those for whom it was first designed. And as the Printing of it secures it from being lost one way, so 'tis the Author's Serious Wish and Prayer, that the Pious Care and Attention of those that peruse it, may hinder it from being lost another.

SPIRITUAL



# SPIRITUAL COUNSEL:

OR, THE

## Father's Advice

TO HIS

## CHILDREN.

*My Dear Children,*

**I**F ever you live to Maturity of Age, and I happen to die before you do so, remember and consider the Words of a careful and affectionate Father, touch'd with a most lively Concern both for your Present and Future Welfare, but chiefly your Future, that of your precious and immortal Souls, which must be either Eternally Happy or Miserable in another World, according as you live and demean yourselves in this. And therefore,

I.

Be sure that you dedicate your tender Years to the Service and Glory of God, and that you remember your Creator in the days of your Youth. You will then have most need to remember

member him, and you will then be most apt to forget him. Set therefore a double guard upon that part of your Life, and be then especially diligent to remember and be mindful of him that made you. It will make your Duty Easie, and your Lives Happy. You will have the Comfort of it when you come to Die, besides the constant Satisfaction it will afford you all your Lives long.

## II.

And as you make Religion your *First*, so be sure you make it your *Greatest* and chiefest Care: Not a *By-work* ( as the general manner of the World is ) but your Principal Concern, the great Business and Employment of your whole Life. For indeed Religion is your Greatest Concernment, and therefore ought to be your main Business and Employment. *Solomon* tells you, That to Fear God and keep his Commandments is the Whole of Man: And a Greater than he, That 'tis the One thing Needful. 'Tis *For* this that you have your Being in this World, and 'tis *By* this that you can hope for a Well-being in that which is to come. Your eternal Happiness depends upon it, and therefore as you tender that, see that you apply yourselves chiefly to the Fear and Love of God, and the keeping of his Commandments; and that you make Religion the great Affair and Employment of your Mind and Life.

## III.

And as you make it your Great, so be sure you make it your *Daily* Employment; as you certainly will if you truly make it your Great one. Let not a Day pass over your Heads with-

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out Serious Thoughts of God, and a due Performance of Religious Homage to him; and endeavour to spend every Day as well as you can, and to make every Day a Step towards Eternity. You do so in a *Natural*, and therefore take care you do so also in a *Spiritual* Sense, making every day some Preparation for your Last, considering that you know not when that will be; that you have but a few days in all to spend, and how precious every Portion even of the longest Life must needs be, upon which an *Eternity* depends. And therefore for your better Improvement of every day, I advise you,

## IV.

To accustom your selves upon your first waking in the Morning, to Meditate seriously upon God, to offer to him your first Thoughts, and most solemnly to dedicate to him your selves, your Souls and Bodies, your Designs and your Undertakings, and the whole succeeding day, which in all likelihood will be the better spent for having been so happily begun. And as you thus begin the day with God, so let it end with him too, making him the last subject of your Meditations when you lie down in your Beds, and as you compose your selves to your nightly Rest; that so you may both Wake and Sleep in God.

## V.

The two Extremities of the day being thus secured, there will be the less danger of Mis-spending the middle parts of it. But for the better Security and Improvement of these, let me advise you in General, to accustom your selves to make Solemn Prayers to God in Private  
upon

upon your Knees, at least three times a day; (besides occasional and less solemn Ejaculations) and as much oftner as you find your selves disposed. And if these times be fix'd and stated to some certain Hours, so much the better, that so the return of the Hour appointed may as a Natural Instrument, put you in mind of your Devotions.

## VI.

To make which the more Orderly, pray take care, that the first thing that you do in the Morning as soon as you are up and conveniently habited, be to Sanctifie and Hallow the day, by a solemn devotional Address of your selves to God in Prayer. Let this be the first thing you do, I mean before you take any Secular or Worldly thing in hand. For there is one certain thing that I would advise you to do even before you say your Prayers, and that is, to read as attentively and considerately as you can a Chapter in the Bible. This I would have you do every Morning before you go to your Prayers, which you will find to be a most excellent and advantageous Practice, not only as serving to inform your Understandings, and bring you acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, but also to warm and quicken your Wills and Affections, and to tune your Souls, and put them into a due Composure for your following Devotion. For which the two other more solemn Seasons are, some time about the middle of the day, and at night when you go to Bed. At which time besides your ordinary Devotion, as in the other two, you would do well to take a Review of the day past, and particularly examine how you have spent it,

not only that if you have done well you may glorifie God; and if ill, may humble your selves before him, and make your Peace with him before you commit your selves to sleep; but also that by this Exercise you may know what progress you make in Piety, what the State of your Souls is, and how Accounts stand between you and God; and may also learn to spend every day the better, as you will find your selves induced to do, by the very prospect of that returning Account which you are to render of it to your selves at Night.

## VII.

Besides which *Nightly Review*, I think it very expedient that you should set apart some certain Seasons, wherein to sit in more solemn Judgment upon your selves, to review and take account of your past Lives, to call your Sins to remembrance, to confess and bewail them, and to humble your Souls and Bodies in the Presence of God for them, and to form new Resolutions, and new Acts of Abhorrence and Detestation against them. These days I would have to be purely and intirely days of Religion, to be wholly spent in Reading, Prayer, and Divine Meditation. Sequester your selves upon these days from all Worldly Business, retire from all Company, and let nothing be the Imployment of them, but what relates to the *Grand Affair*. And that these days may be thus strictly kept and spent, I would have their return to be but *Monthly*, suppose the first or last *Friday* in every Month. I the rather mention *Friday*, because it is one of the Church-Fasts, and I would have you make these days to be days of *Fasting* as well as of

of *Prayer*, that so both together may compleat your Repentance and Humiliation. The great Advantage of thus frequently making up your Accounts in these your Nightly and Monthly Reckonings, you will find to be chiefly this, that it will greatly contribute to the present Amendment of your Lives, your Repentances thus keeping pace with your Miscarriages ; and to the ease of your Consciences when you come to die. At which time you will find it work enough to engage with your bodily Disorders, and to attend to the proper Duties of your present Condition, tho you have not the Course of a whole Life to unravel, nor a train of Actions long past and long forgotten to bring to remembrance. And indeed 'twill be a sad thing to have then Sums to cast up, and Reckonings to make, when you are Sick and in Pain, and have neither Understanding, nor Memory, nor Leisure, nor Will to recollect your selves.

## VIII.

In these and all other times of your Devotion, let me further advise you to observe this General Rule, Never to put your selves into the Presence of God by Prayer, till you have first recollected your selves by awful thoughts of the Divine Majesty, and have by some short but serious Meditation, composed your Minds to a reverent and devout Performance of so Important and Divine a Duty. For besides that 'tis rude, and savours of Profaneness, to rush into the Presence of God without previous Consideration: He that approaches him so Irreverently at first, is not like to bespeak him with much greater Reverence afterwards. Therefore compose your

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Spirit before you begin, and be not like one that goes to play upon his Instrument before he has tuned it. 'Tis the Advice of a wiser Person than I, *Before thou Prayest*, says the Son of Syrach, *prepare thy self, and be not as one that tempteth the Lord.*

## IX.

After you have thus duely disposed your *Heart*, then you may with decency proceed to bend your *Knees*. And whenever you Pray to God, be sure you do it with all that Humility and Reverence that becomes a *Creature* and a *Sinner*, speaking both to his *Maker* and his *Judge*, and with all possible affectionate Warmth and Fervour of Spirit; this being the very Life and Soul of Prayer, and the only thing that distinguishes it from pronouncing so many Words, or the going over in ones mind so many Thoughts. Let Earnestness therefore and Fervour of Affection, be constant Ingredients in all your Prayers, especially when you Pray for the Forgiveness of your Sins. Pray then yet *more earnestly*, as your Saviour did in the Garden, when he was about to Suffer for them. And sure one would think, that he who begs God to forgive him his Sins, and understands how great a thing he asks, and is sensible in what need he stands of it, and withall how unworthy to receive it, and considers the greatness of the Person of whom he begs it, and of the Price by which the very Possibility of it was purchased, and how much Goodness that is which bestows it, and consequently how high a Favour it must be in case he receive it, need not be further minded or admonish'd of being Earnest and Fervent in his Devotion.

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## X.

But that you may Pray Fervently, be sure you Pray *Attentively*. This is necessary to the other, as well as upon its own account, it being impossible that a Man should be moved or affected with what he either does not at all understand, or does not consider. But indeed these mutually help one another. Warmth of Affection will make Men Attentive, and Attention will help to procure and excite Affection. Be sure therefore that you use great Attention and Fixation of Mind in your Prayers, that you attend heedfully both to the Matter of your Prayers, and to that awful Majesty you Pray to, and that your Thoughts do not wander from either of them. Always remembering, that there can hardly be a greater piece of Irreverence, than to approach God by a Bodily Movement, when our Spirits are absent from him, and engaged upon other Objects: That a Prayer so put up, is not only lost and thrown away, but profaned; and that instead of performing a Duty, we commit a Sin, by taking God's Name in vain. And let me tell you, that this is the worst way of taking God's Name in vain, because we do it so deliberately, and under a pretence of worshipping him. But that you may not be guilty of this, let me advise you,

## XI.

Not only to that which by Spiritual Persons is commonly advised in this case, *viz.* to Simplify and recollect your Spirits by Silence and Repose, to be loose and disengaged from the World, to have as little Business and as few Desires as may be; but also to accustom your

selves, whenever you happen to hear the Name of God mention'd, to make a Reverential Pause, and form within your selves an inward Act of Adoration and Worship: Which you will find not only to be a good Practice in it self, but also to tend to good, as leaving and fixing a Pious Impression upon your Spirits; whereby you will become less apt to Profane that great and venerable Name in your more solemn Addresses, which you have thus accustomed your selves to reverence, when even occasionally mention'd.

## XII.

And as you take care that your Spirits accompany your Bodies in your Prayers, so let it be your next care that your Bodies accompany your Spirits. I mean that you joyn Bodily Worship to your Spiritual, and use the most lowly and reverential Gestures and Postures that you can possibly put your selves into. Such as Bowing the Head, Elevation of the Hands and Eyes, bending the Knees, and even Prostration it self upon more Solemn Occasions. And this not only because God has a right to his whole Creature, and consequently to the Worship of the Body as well as of the Soul; but also because Bodily Worship contributes mightily to the Advantage of Spiritual; and the Soul not only signifies and expresses her Devotion by the lowly Postures of her Body, but also cherishes and helps it forward. As some Men by acting an Angry Part, and putting on the outward Air of Resentment, begin at last to enter into the Spirit of that Passion, which they intended only to personate.

## XIII. If

If you find your selves tempted to lay aside Bodily Worship ( as some have done and do ) upon the Pretence of Worshipping God in Spirit and in Truth, I would have you look upon it as no other than a Suggestion of the Devil, who is willing to defraud God of one half of his due, the Service of the Body, under the Pretence of its being unnecessary ( tho he would fain have had it himself, when he would have bribed our Saviour to *fall down* and worship him ) and your selves of that advantage which the Humiliations of your Bodies would derive upon the Disposition of your Souls. But for your Satisfaction in this Point ( not to trouble you with any Critical Remarks upon the Words *Spirit* and *Truth* ) you need only consider, that as God under the Ceremonial Law did not command the Worship of the Body without the Engagement of the Spirit, so neither does he now require that of the Spirit, without the Fellowship and Communion of the Body. And that as a Religion consisting in Externals only, is not worthy of an Intellectual Nature, so a Worship purely Mental and Intellectual is too Abstract and Sublime for a Nature allied to Sense, and depending upon it. But our Saviour is the best Interpreter of his own Law, and his Practice the best Comment. He to be sure was the most Spiritual Worshipper that ever was, and yet none more remarkable than he, for using Bodily Prostrations, from which he would not excuse himself even upon the Cross it self: For when he was to surrender up his Soul into the Hands of his Father, he did it in a Posture expressive of Reverence and Devotion, *He bowed*

*bowed his Head, the Text says, and gave up the Ghost.* But for this it may suffice, that God has given you a Soul and a Body in Conjunction, and you are to *Serve and Worship him* in the same manner as he has *made you.*

## XIV.

But this composure of your Bodies into a reverential and devotional Posture, to which I advise you in your Closets, ought more especially to be regarded and observ'd in the publick Worship of God ( that in the very Nature of it, requiring visible Testimonies and outward Tokens of Veneration ) which I would have you constantly to frequent in all the parts of it, especially those two so much disregarded and neglected by some of late ( which yet are the only parts that properly deserve the Name of *Worship* ) the Prayers of the Church, and the Administration of the Holy Sacrament. In all which let your outward Deportment, as well as inward Spirit, be Grave, Serious and Composed; such as becomes the Place and Presence you are in, and the Duties you are about, and that decent Respect which you owe to the Assemblies of the Saints.

## XV.

So much may serve for your Direction, as to the *Manner* of your Devotion. Concerning the *Matter* of it, I need only mind you, that Spiritual Blessings are the things you are chiefly to Pray for; and that those are also the things for which you are chiefly to give Thanks. For which you have a plain President in that Divine Form of Prayer commended to our use by our Lord himself, in which the Preference is so far given

given to our Spiritual Part and Concern, that there is but one Petition for the things relating to the Good of this Temporal Life. And that too no farther than is requisite to our present Sustentation, *Give us this day our daily Bread.* In imitation of which it has pleased the Wisdom of our Church, in that large comprehensive Office call'd the *Litany*, or general Supplication, to have but one Clause of Prayer, that directly and expressly Petitions for the good of this Life, which is, *That it may please thee to give and preserve to our use the kindly Fruits of the Earth, so as in due time we may enjoy them.* From which ('tis observable) without dwelling long upon it, she immediately passes to the requesting of true Repentance and Forgiveness of Sins, with which she closes all. Wherein you may yet further observe, that tho the Church in great Wisdom, has thought requisite to have but one Prayer of this sort, and to drive off even that one among the last, yet with equal Wisdom she thought fit not to make it the last of all, lest such a Close of our Devotion should leave behind it a relish of Earthly Good upon the taste of the Soul. To prevent which she concludes with a Petition of an higher Nature, *That it may please thee to give us true Repentance; to forgive us all our Sins, Negligences and Ignorances, and to endue us with the Grace of thy Holy Spirit, to amend our Lives according to thy Holy Word.*

## XVI.

To the Exercise of *Actual*, I would in the next place advise you to joyn the Practice of *Habitual* Prayer. By which I mean, that you would so accustom your selves to the Contemplation of  
God

God in and through all his Creatures, that none of those Objects which surround you, may ever present themselves to your Senses, without awakening the Idea of God in your Minds, and admonishing you of that absolute and intire Dependence you and all Creatures have upon him. So that where-ever you are, or with whomsoever you converse, or whatever your Business or Occupation be, you may always have a lively Sense of God ever returning upon you, and mixing it self with all your Engagements, and Sanctifying even your most indifferent Actions; that your Hearts may be always flaming with his Love, and your Imaginations fix'd and stay'd in his Holy Fear; your Passions being in profound Silence and awful Repose, and you yourselves always ready and disposed to perform those more express Acts of Worship, which in their proper Seasons you owe to God. Whom however you may be truly and properly said continually to worship, and so to fulfil that Exhortation of the Apostle, of *Praying without ceasing*, when you have learnt thus to carry about with you a constant Habit of Divine and Religious Thoughts.

## XVII.

This *Habitual* Prayer is the Perfection of Devotion, and the truest Mark of a Heart thoroughly warm'd and animated with the Spirit of Piety and Religion. The Images of those things which we dearly love, will frequently return upon us, and we are always disposed to give them entertainment as often as they offer themselves. And from our doing so, we may conclude how well we love them. And were the



the Love of God as thoroughly kindled in our Hearts, had we but the same Passion for him, that we have for some sensible Objects, we should find his great Idea upon all occasions present to our Thoughts, and that every thing would bring him to our Remembrance; our waking and our sleeping Thoughts would be upon him, and he would enter in upon us at every Sense, we should see him and feel him in all things, be always under a quick and affecting Sense of him, and always in a ready Disposition for his Worship and Service. Thus would the State of our Minds be, if we had them once truly touch'd with the Love of God, to which also this way of Habitual Prayer is the most certain and compendious Method, it being impossible that a Man should so continually put himself in the Presence of so amiable a Being, without being taken and ravish'd with the Perfection of his Beauty.

## XVIII.

But after all ( my good Children ) I would have you think and remember, that a just and upright Conversation is the best way of Worship, and a holy and good Life the best Prayer; and that then you serve God most acceptably, when you keep his Commandments, and live in constant Obedience to his Will. When in the Language of the Prophet you do justly, and love Mercy, and walk humbly with your God; or as the Apostle expresses it, when denying all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, you live Godly, Righteously, and Soberly in this present World. You may meet with some perhaps, that will tell you by way of reproach, that this is *Morality*.



lity: And you may tell them again, that they could not have call'd it by a better name. That it is such Morality as our Saviour taught in his Sermon upon the Mount, and of which his whole Life was the most shining Example; such Morality as was taught by his great Forerunner the Holy Baptist, and by all the Prophets that went before him, and by his Apostles that came after him. In fine, such Morality as is absolutely necessary to the present order of this World, and to the Happiness of the next; to our Admission into Heaven, and to our Enjoyment of God there, whom ( as we are expressly told ) without Holiness no Man shall ever see.

## XIX.

Now in order to a Holy Life, I shall not think it necessary ( at least in these Papers design'd for more particular Remarks ) to describe to you the several parts of it, they are so plainly and fully laid down in the Holy Scriptures, and so largely commented on and explain'd in those many excellent Practical Treatises, which by the good Providence of God we of this Age and Nation enjoy. To which therefore I chuse rather to refer you, advising you in the first place, to be very Diligent and Constant in reading the Bible, especially the New Testament, and in that particularly our Lords Sermon upon the Mount, which you would do well to get by heart. And among Human Writings, recommending to you chiefly Bishop *Taylor's* Holy Living and Dying, the Whole Duty of Man, Dr. *Sherlock's* two Books of Death and Judgment, and *Thomas a Kempis* of the Imitation of Christ. Which last Book, tho not of so nice and artificial

as a Composure as the rest, seems yet to be written in such an excellent and truly Christian Spirit, and to have such a Vein of Piety and Simplicity running thro' it, as is beyond all the Finesses and Imbelishments that Art can give. Leaving you therefore a while with this good Company, for a full Instruction in your Christian Duty, I desire, that after you have learn'd it, you would lend your Attention to the following Advices, which I shall suggest to you for your better Assistance in the Practice and Performance of it.

## XX.

The first great and general Instrument of a Holy Life is *Consideration*, by which I mean the actual Attention and Advertency of our Minds to those things, the Knowledge and Theory of which, we have already in Power and general Habit. This, in relation to Civil Action and Business, or the Management of Affairs, is call'd *Presence of Mind*; but in the Concernment of Morality and Well-living, it usually goes by the name of *Consideration*, and implies an actual View of those Practical Truths, whereof we have an habitual Notion or Knowledge. This, next to the Grace of God, is the great Principle of a Good Life; and the want of this is the main Cause, into which the Sin and Misery of Mankind is generally to be resolv'd. Infinitely more Perish through want of Consideration, than either through Ignorance or Infidelity. Ignorance, indeed, and Error, of one sort or other, I suppose to be the true Cause of all our Miscarriages, ( for if we Thought rightly, we should Will and Act rightly too ) but as actual  
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Ignorance is more common than Habitual, so I suppose more Men to Miscarry through Actual than through Habitual Ignorance, that is, for want of *Considering*, than for want of *Knowing*. Let me therefore advise you in the first place, and in general, to apply your selves, with all possible Care and Diligence, to the Practice of Consideration; to have in your Minds a present and actual View of those things which you know, both concerning your Duty, and the several Motives and Engagements to the Performance of it. Ever remembering that 'tis not the knowing a great deal, but the due considering of that little a Man knows, that must make him either *Wise* or *Good*.

## XXI.

Now among the particular Objects of Consideration, I think it advisable that you should, by repeated Reflections, endeavour to fix and imprint upon your Minds, and have always in actual View *this Thought*, That *Sin is the Greatest of all Evils*. Which Sentiment, as long as you preserve a bright and clear Sense of it in your Understandings, will secure your Wills from all possibility of Error. 'Tis the losing the View of this Truth, by some Cloud of Passion intervening, that makes Men Sin; and 'tis the recovering of it again, that, next to the Grace of God, leads them to Repentance. Now the same Principle that makes Men repent after they have sinn'd, would, if then duly attended to, have kept them from Sinning. As this will certainly do. For it being impossible that a Man should will Evil as Evil; he that commits Sin, must for that instant think it at least a *Comparative Good*, which

which he can never do, if he actually thinks it the greatest Evil ( there being then no greater Evil supposed, in respect of which it may receive that Estimation ) and consequently can never commit it, while he continues actually in that Judgment, unless you will suppose him to will Evil formally as Evil, which is utterly impossible. Take great care therefore, to have this Principle well lodg'd and fix'd in your Understandings, That Sin is the Greatest Evil.

## XXII.

This Consideration will suggest to you another, as the Consequence and Improvement of it, which is, That Sin must necessarily be repented of one time or other. There is an unavoidable Necessity for it. I do not mean only a conditional Necessity; if we will be pardon'd, but that it is simply and absolutely necessary, that is, That the Judgment of Sins being the greatest Evil (however silenc'd and interrupted for a time) will infallibly return again upon us; and we must and shall one time or other repent of it, and wish we had never committed it; either in this Life ( if we be so happy ) in order to our Pardon and Salvation, or at least in the other, when the Powers and Faculties of our Souls shall be more awakned, and our Spiritual Eyes so open'd, as to see things in their proper Colours, and in their true Dimensions. Now consider this, especially when you find your selves tempted to any Sin. Consider then, what you are about to do, a thing that you must again undo, and wish, one time or other, that you had never done, and so whether with such Thoughts about you, you can be guilty of such a Folly.

## XXIII.

But to render this Consideration of Sin's being

the greatest Evil, and an Evil consequently that must and will be repented of the more effectual, my next Advice is, That you would joyn to it, the Consideration of the utter Emptiness and Vanity of all those Pleasures and Enjoyments which tempt to the Commission of it. A thing which every Man's Reason *may* suggest to him, and which every Man's Experience *does*, and yet which so few are actually, and in all Instances convinc'd of; that forgetting their Disappointments, they run again as greedily to their Enjoyments, as if they had never made trial of their Vanity. Inasmuch that the great Wisdom of Solomon gave proof of it self in nothing, more than in having obtain'd at length (tho late) a thorough Sense, an abiding Conviction, of the Worlds Vanity, which was the top of his Wisdom, and the result of his many Experiments. Endeavour therefore to possess your Minds of the like Conviction, and to fortifie your former Consideration, of Sin's being the greatest Evil, with this additional Perswasion, of the Vanity and Nullity of all those Pleasures which may allure to the Commission of it, that so having lightned this opposite Scale of the Ballance, as well as added weight to the other, this last, by this further advantage, may not fail to weigh down; and you may be effectually secured from transgressing your Duty, when the *Evil* of it appears so *great*, and the *Pleasure* so *small*. XXIV.

Which that you may be, extend your Thoughts yet further, and consider with your selves, at what rate, and to what degree, God hates Sin. God who is infinite Wisdom, and infinite Love, all whose Wills are govern'd and directed by the

eter.

eternal Rules of Order and Reason, and are from all Eternity form'd and laid out in Number, Weight, and Measure, who assigns to every Object its due Proportion of Love and Hatred, loving nothing but what is truly Lovely, and so far as it is such; and hating nothing but what is truly hateful, and so far as it is such. I say, consider how this great and just Dispenser of his Love and Hatred hates Sin; and let your Hatred of it take its measure from his. And if you would know how great this his Hatred of Sin is, you may measure it with the same Line wherewith St. John does his Love towards Mankind, *So God loveth the World*, says St. John, *that he gave his only begotten Son*, &c. And so may we say, *So God hated Sin*, that he gave his only begotten Son to be a Sacrifice and an Atonement for it. God's Hatred to Sin, was, it seems, so great, that he himself only could pacify his Anger for the Commission of it; which also was so great, that he chose rather that his own beloved Son should bleed and die for it, than that it should go unpunish'd. And now consider with your selves, whether you can conceive a greater degree of Hatred than this. How could God possibly hate Sin more, or How could he give a more sensible and convincing Demonstration of his Hatred of it? And if God thought it just and Meet to punish Sin so severely in the Person of his own Son, who also was ready to sink under the weight and burthen of it; tho' but for a few hours under it; then consider yet further with your selves, how heavy the Stroke of Divine Justice will fall upon all persevering and impenitent Sinners, when having no Interest in the Passion of their Redeemer, they shall suffer as

fully for themselves, as if no Mediator had interposed ; and how little they will be able to stand under the weight of God's displeasure to all Eternity.

XXV.

To these Thoughts, concerning the Nature of Sin, and the Consequences of it, you may yet add a further Improvement, By considering that this is the only Evil which was thought worthy of the Undertaking of the Son of God to deliver us from. In the height of all that Love and Affection which the Compassionate Saviour of the World had for Perishing Mankind, he did not think it worth his while to rescue them from Pain, Sickness, Poverty, Disgrace, or any of the common Afflictions and Uneasinesses of Human Life, no not even from Death it self. All these he seems to have over-look'd, as beneath his Notice, and unworthy his Regard ; however we are apt to think them the only Evils. Only Sin and Damnation appear'd to him to be Evils of such a Magnitude, that he could not endure the thought of our being subjected to them ; and to deliver us from these, was indeed thought an Undertaking worthy of a Redeemer from Heaven, and from the very Bosom of God. Consider this, till the Consideration of it has given you some Idea and Apprehension of the Evil of Sin ; if not such as our Saviour had in the Garden, when he was about to suffer for it ; yet at least such as may serve to deter you from the Commission of it. And do not voluntarily plunge your selves into such a State of Misery, for the Prevention of which, and only for the Prevention of which, the Lord of Life was content to Die.

XXVI.

After you have thus arm'd and fortifi'd your Minds,

Minds,



Minds, by the Consideration of the great Evil of Sin, turn your Glass upon the contrary side, and let your next Prospect be, of the Beauty and Excellency of Goodness and Vertue, of Righteousness and true Holiness. Consider how highly reasonable it is in it self, and how becoming of you, as rational Creatures; how suitable to the order and end of your Beings; and how truly perfective of your Natures; how it conduces to the Enlargement of your Understandings, to the true Freedom and Redemption of your Wills ( for if the Son shall make you Free, you shall be Free indeed ) and to the Calm of your Passions; and indeed to the general Health, Pleasure, Satisfaction, Tranquillity, and Repose of your Souls, which then enjoy most Content, when in due Frame and Temper, when their Thoughts are best govern'd, and their Wills and Movements are most Conformable to Order. Consider that Goodness is the Natural State of the Soul, and how much she is at ease, and how well she feels her self when in that State; as on the contrary, how restless and uneasie she is, how full of Pain and rational Displacency, when otherwise affected and disposed, than by the Law of God, and that of her own Being, she ought to be. Consider what a Natural Relation and Connexion there is between Holiness and Happiness; that the latter is the necessary Effect and Result of the former; which procures and produces it as a Natural and Physical Cause; insomuch, that the very inward Reason and Moral Distinction of Good and Evil, is taken from its Natural Aptness, or Unaptness, to the Interest and Happiness of Human Life. Consider, how of its own proper Nature, it tends to the



true Advantage and Benefit of Man, in all his Capacities, both as a Solitary, and as a Sociable Creature; how it procures our Happiness on Earth, and what a necessary Preparative and Disposition it is ( not only as a *Positive*, but as a *Natural Condition* ) to qualify us for that of Heaven, the Fruition of God, into whose Likeness we must first awake before we can be satisfied with his Beauty, and be partakers of the Divine Nature before we can enjoy it. Consider how pleasant and full of Satisfaction a Holy Life is, in the present Exercise and actual Discharge of it; ( there being no Joys like the Joys of Religion, and no Peace like the Peace of God ) and how pleasant and ravishing upon the Review, especially the last, when we come to look back upon a Life well spent upon our Death-beds, and can thence also with Comfort and Satisfaction look forward into the unconceivable as well as unspeakable Joys of Eternity, the last Crown and Reward of a Holy and well-order'd Life.

## XXVII.

As a Corollary to this Consideration, let me suggest to you another: Whenever you are tempted to Sin by *Pleasure* ( for that's the great Bate and Allurement to Sin ) consider that the Pleasures of Innocence are much greater, even at present, setting aside all regard to *After-Happiness*, much more if that be also taken into the account. And that therefore the true Question or Competition does not lie here, whether you will do your Duty or enjoy Pleasure ( for you may do both ; ) nor whether you will chuse to Sin or want Pleasure ( for you may do neither ; ) but whether you will enjoy the Pleasures of Sin, or the Pleasures of Innocence

innocence and a Holy Life ; the Pleasures of Sin that are but for a Season, or the Pleasures of Righteousness that endure for ever. This you will find (if you well attend to it ) to be the true State of the Question, whenever you are tempted to Sin ; and by putting it into these Terms, you will quickly perceive the Absurdity of the strongest Temptation wherewith the Devil can assault you. Therefore consider it well.

## XXVIII.

And when you have let your Thoughts sufficiently expatiate upon this great and double Prospect of the Evil of Sin, and the Reason and Advantage of a Holy Life, let them transport you for a while into the other World, among separate and departed Spirits, those whose Season and opportunity of Action is over, upon whom the Sun of Grace as well as of Natural Life is gone down ; and that Night come in which no Man can work ; and who are either in actual Happiness and actual Misery, or at least in a certain and unalterable Order and Designation to those respective States. Consider with your selves seriously the Condition of these Spirits, and what Thoughts and Sentiments they have of things. What they think of a sinful, and what Sense they have of a holy and religious Life. What inward Rejoycings, and raptures of Spirit those have, who were so Wise and Happy, as to apply themselves to the latter ; and how they do now justify and approve their Conduct, blessing and admiring the Grace of God. And with what Anguish, Rage, Self-condemnation and Regret, those return upon themselves, who lived and indulged themselves in the former. What Retractations ! What Repentances ! How

do they unwish their Thoughts and their Actions, their Designs and their Undertakings, their Business and Employments, their Leagues and their Friendships, their Conversations and their merry Meetings, their Jest upon Religion and upon good Men, yea and their very *Being* ! How do they unwish all these things ; and how passionately do they wish again for those Opportunities which they once had ; and what a value do they set upon that Time which they can never again recover, and which you perhaps mispend and trifle away !

## XXIX.

But that you may no longer do so, consider that Eternity is the only considerable State of Man, and that therefore the great and proper Business and work of Time ought to be, to make Preparation for it. Consider, that after a Man has lived so long in the World, as to come to the Use and Exercise of his Reason, it will be high time to think of going out of it again, and to prepare for that World which is to last, and wherein he is to continue for ever. For 'tis so late before we come to the Use of our Reason ; and the rest of the time we have to spend here afterwards is so short, and withall so very uncertain, that the longest liver had not need to mis-employ any part of his Time, but rather Study all the possible ways of improving it. Especially if it be further consider'd, that the Time of this Life is the only Opportunity for transacting the great Affair of Eternity. You have it now in your Power to be Happy, to make your great Fortune, and to secure your Final State ; but it will not be always so. Your Day will end, and your Night will come, and God will not give you another turn of Probation,

a second Trial ; and therefore it highly concerns you to make the most of this ; and to work while 'tis Day, before the Night come, when no Man can work.

## XXX.

If you are not yet sufficiently moved and affected with a Sense of these things, Consider what Sentiments and apprehensions of them, you will have when you come to Die, what your Notion and Sense of things will then be ; what you will then think of a good and of a wicked Life, of your selves and of the World you live in, and are going from ; what your thoughts will then be of all this Shew and Pageantry, which now so strikes the Senses, and engages the Hearts and Affections of Worldly Men : With what Contempt and Disdain will you now look, now you are going out of the World, upon all those Poms and Vanities which you renounc'd at your coming into it ; and how will you wonder at your selves and all other Men, for having been so often in love with them, and so long captivated and enslaved by them ; and for having so lately discover'd their utter emptiness and deceit. Consider how vain and insignificant will then appear to you all those *little Great* things which the World is now so eager upon, and runs so mad after, Honours, Riches, Pleasures, State and Grandeur, Birth and Quality, Dignities and Preferments ; nay, even *Wis* and *Learning*, every thing but a good Life and a satisfied Conscience ; and how well you will then wish you had lived. These will then be your Thoughts, and this will then be your great wish. Endeavour therefore to have the same Thoughts now that you will have then ; and to live now, as you will wish you had lived, when you come to Die.

## XXXI.

And to make you the more sensible of this, that you may the better imagin to your selves that sense of things which you *will* have when you come to Die, it would be a very advantageous Practice, frequently to recollect with your selves what your thoughts and apprehensions of things *really were*; and what Sentiments you *actually had*, when at any time under a great and dangerous state of Sickness. Recollect and consider ( which you may the more easily do, because 'tis a thing of actual Experiment ) what you then thought of your selves, and of your Condition; of the Life that you had led, of the Time that you had mis-spent, of the infinite Vanities and Follies you had been guilty of, of the Duties you had neglected, or but carelessly and imperfectly perform'd; and of the World of Sins you had committed, and it may be till then, had lived in without Repentance; and of the Hell which you had deserv'd, and which for ought that you knew, you were then to be plung'd into, and for ever after to suffer in. Consider I say, what thoughts you then actually had of these things; and withall, what strong Resolutions, Promises, and Vows, you then made to amend and reform your Lives in case it should please God to Reprieve you a little longer from the Sentence of Death, by restoring you again to your Health. Well, he has done so; you have recover'd your Health, and you have lost your Thoughts and Convictions. But what a strange thing is this! Do you think that your Health makes any real Change in the nature and truth of Things? Those things that were true in your Sickness, are they not as true now; and will they not

not be as true for ever ? Or do you give greater Credit to your Well than to your Sick Judgment ? But consider that you would have the same thoughts when you are well, as you had in your Sickness, if you did but afford the same Attention, and had your Spiritual Senses equally awake, and your outward Senses equally disengaged from worldly Objects. Consider therefore, that those Sick thoughts are most likely to be true, and according to the right Ideas of things ; and that therefore they will certainly return again when you shall be in the same Condition, and things shall be placed to you in the same Light. They will return again whenever you return to your selves, whenever you dare think ; or if you should by Arts of Diversion Ward them off for a while, yet you will be sure to meet with them again when within View of Death ; for they are part of her Train and Retinue. But 'tis best to have them before, and to live in the full Sense, and under the constant direction and government of them. And indeed I cannot give you better instruction in order to a holy Life, than, in one word, so to lead your Lives, as you *shall* wish when you come to Die, and as you *have* already wish'd when you were Sick. And that you may do so,

## XXXII.

I further advise you, to be much in the Contemplation of the shortness and uncertainty of Life, and of the Day of God's Grace ; whose limits are equally uncertain, and perhaps of a shorter and narrower compass than those of your Natural Life. Be as much also in the Contemplation of the four last things, Heaven, Hell, Death and Judgment. Place your selves frequently upon  
your

your Death-beds, in your Coffins, and in your Graves. Act over frequently in your Minds, the Solemnity of your own Funerals; and entertain your Imaginations with all the lively Scenes of Mortality. Meditate much upon the Places, and upon the Days of Darknes, and upon the Fewness of those that shall be saved; and be always with your Hour-glass in your hands, measuring out your own little Span, and comparing it with the endless Circle of Eternity. These are great and engaging Thoughts, and such as will lessen, contract, nay, even annihilate any thing that shall be placed together, and compared with them.

## XXXIII.

There is indeed nothing that can diminish the Idea's of these things to a Mind assured of the Truth of them, but only that which represents every thing little, *Distance* and *Futurity*. The greatest Objects when a great way off, appear, but little to the Eye; and Futurity represents things after the same manner to the Mind. Even Heaven and Hell, and Eternity it self, when eyed thro' this end of the Prospective, lose their just and native Dimensions, and draw up into so many little Points, while in the mean time, this World of ours which really is so, by this one single advantage of being Present, makes a very bulky Figure, and appears as *Great* as it is *Near*. There is something in the very Name of the *World to come*, that even to those who are perswaded of its future Existence, lessens the Idea of it. But you are to consider, that this is a meer Fallacy of our *Imaginations*, as the other is of our *Senses*. For distance of time can make no more real Change in the true and natural dimensions of things, than Distance of Place can; and things



things Future, if of a certain and infallible event, ought to have the same Power and Moment with us as if they were present; for that they will be one time or other, or else they are not now truly *Future*. This therefore I say, is a meer Fallacy of our Imaginations, to make the Futurity of a thing diminutive of its greatness. And tho it be a good Remedy against it, to remember that it is so, yet I think it would be a better, if in your Contemplations of these great Objects, you would no longer represent them to your Mind as *Futurities*, and things at a distance, but consider them as *Present Realities*, as Objects that bear hard upon, and almost touch your very Eyes. Lay therefore the great and last Scenes of the Divine *Drama* often before you; place them in your very next View; and imagin every part of the dreadful Solemnity, as in present Transaction. Imagin to your selves, that you now hear the Arch-Angels Trump sounding to Judgment, and calling you and all the Sons of *Adam* out of your Graves to meet your Judge, and receive from him your final Doom. Imagin that you see him coming in the Clouds of Heaven with Power and great Glory, with his Angelick Attendance about him, and the Standard of the Cross carried before him. That you see his Throne erected, the Judgment set, and the Books open'd. That you behold all Nations gather'd together before him, and the Dead, both Small and Great, standing at the Bar of his Justice, and, with trembling, waiting for the great deciding Sentence. Imagin that you see him making his Preparatory Division, separating them one from another, as a Shepherd divides his Sheep from the Goats; placing the Sheep upon his Right Hand, and the Goats upon  
the



the Left. And here stand a while and make a Pause, and imagin if you can, what Passions of Joy and Horror respectively, this preparatory Distinction will raise in the Parties concern'd, what a Deluge of Grief, Consternation and Despair, must overflow the Spirits of them, whose Lot is to be placed on the Left hand ! And what Tides and Inundations of Joy and Consolation must break in upon those Happy Souls, whom their smiling Judge, as an Omen of his following Favour, places on his Right Hand. Who can imagin the Sentiments that will follow upon such a Signal, such a Fatal Difference ! But if you would have some Notion of it, try it upon your selves, fancy your selves now placed on the Right Hand, now on the Left, and see with what different Sentiments you will be affected. But to go on, imagin now after this visible Distinction made of all Men, that you hear and see the Judge proceed to that which shall separate them for ever, the last and irrepealable Sentence, saying to those on his Right Hand, *Come ye Blessed, &c.* and then to those on his Left, *Depart from me ye Cursed, &c.* Imagin, if you can, how differently these two Sentences will be pronounced, and how differently they will be receiv'd. Then let your Imagination go on and attend the Blessed into Heaven, and the Damned into Hell, where both enter upon their respective Portions, the greatest Happiness and the greatest Misery, and that not for a few Months, Years, or Ages, but for a whole Eternity, without the least *Hope* or *Fear* of any End. Make all these things as present to your *Minds*, as the things of this World are to your *Senses*, lay them out thus before you, contemplate them at hand, and when by this Anticipati-

on of thought you have thus Ante-dated the great things of Eternity, and have by that Faith, which is the Substance of things hoped for, and the Evidence of things not seen, given the next World the same Advantage that this has, that of being Present, you may then ( as no longer living by Sense but by Faith ) securely trample upon all those Temptations of the World, to which you see others, for want of this intellectual view, yield every day ; and may make the World it self, with all its Pomp and Glory, vanish and disappear when you please. But for your further Security,

## XXXIV.

Whenever you undertake any Set and Deliberate Action ( for as for those that are done by a sudden prevention of Instinct, and as it were *Mechanical* Impulse, as spreading out ones Hands when one is like to fall, they come under no moral Estimation ) I would have you sit down and consider, whether you can any way refer that Action to the Glory of God ; whether you can truly and sincerely say, Lord, I do this Action for thee, and in regard to thy Honour and Glory. And in case the Nature and Quality of the Action be such, that it will not admit of an Affirmative Answer to that demand, I advise you not to meddle with that Action. For as that Action which has no end at all, but is done by the mere force of Mechanism, is no *Human* Action, so that which has an ultimate end, short of the Glory of God, and that does not terminate in him, can be no *good* Action. For God ought to be the End as well as the Beginning of all our ways ; and even our most indifferent Actions ought to have a reference to his Glory, according to that general Advice of the Apostle, *Whether*

you

*you eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the Glory of God.*

## XXXV.

But in case the Action be of a doubtful and uncertain Nature, and carry in it a double Appearance, so that you have some Diffidence and Suspence in your Resolutions about it, I would then advise you for the greater Security of your Innocence, to consider, what you think Jesus Christ, if he were now upon Earth, according to the Idea you have of him from the account of his Life in the Gospels, would do in such a case. Whether he who fought the Glory, and was conformable to the Will of God in all things, would do such an Action or no. If you think upon a due Estimation and Collation of things that he would not, neither by my advice should you. For to be sure that which would not become *Christ* to do, can never be fit for a *Christian*.

## XXXVI.

To exemplifie these two Rules, by an Instance applicable to both: Suppose you were invited or otherwise disposed to go to a *Ball* or a *Play*; before you adventure to do so, I would advise you to pause a while, and consider, whether you can possibly make any reference of such an Action as that is, to the Glory of God; whether you can, in any true Sense or real meaning say thus, Lord I do this thing, I go to this *Play* or this *Ball*, for thee and for thy sake; in the force of thy Love, and in pursuance of thy Glory. If your Conscience answers no, I would by no means advise you to go. But if it answers doubtfully, and with Hesitation and Suspence, I would then have you put your selves to this Question, Whether or no you do in  
your

your Conscience really think, that the Holy and Blessed Jesus, according to that Character and Representation you have of him, and his way of living, in the Gospel, would, if now again upon Earth, do such an Action? Whether you do verily think, that it would consist with that Grave, Serious and recollected Spirit, and that constant Air of Devotion and Religious Severity, which appear'd in our Saviour's ordinary Life, and the general way of his Conversation, to go to a Play or a Ball, and whether you think he would do it? If upon a serious Consideration you think he would not, whatever plausible Arguments you may hear from others, or suggest to your selves for the Lawfulness of it, I would by no means advise you to venture upon such an Action, to do that which you your selves at the same time think your Lord and Master would not do; and yet, which considering the Strength of his Vertue, and that Force and Power he had to withstand the greatest Temptations, he might more safely do than you.

## XXXVII.

To the foregoing Considerations I shall only add one more, and which I shall recommend to you as a general and very compendious Instrument for your assistance towards a Holy and Religious Life, and that is, That you would bring your selves to an Habitual Sense and Consideration of the Omnipresence and Omniscience of God, that by reason of the Infinity both of his Essence and Knowledge, he is present in every Place, and privy to every Thought, that you cannot go where he is not, or do what he does not see; that you have your Life, Motion, and Being in him, and that you are always under his Eye; that he is about your Path, and a-

bout your Bed, and spies out all your ways, which are better known to him than they are to your selves; that he is an Essence without Bounds, and a Light without Darknes; that he sees and knows every thing, and is every where; and that you cannot Sin against him, but you must Sin in him. Consider this, and *stand in awe, and Sin not; Commune with your own Hearts, and in your Chamber* ( in your most secret Retirements ) *and be still*, having your Thoughts and Passions so quiet and composed, and in such decent Silence and Repose, as becomes that awful Presence you are in, even when most alone. Habituate your selves to set God always *before you*, as you are always *before him*; and let every Place be to you as a Temple, as an Holy of Holies, yea, even as Heaven it self; that so being always in his Light, and having your Eye fix'd upon his, you may not dare to commit any Indecency, lest you be found guilty of that most astonishing Impudence of the Apostate Angels, of Sinning in the very *Face and Presence of God*.

## XXXVIII.

This is all that I have to offer you by way of rational *Reflection and Consideration*, for your Incitement to a Holy Life, and your Assistance in it. I shall now only commend to you some few things by way of *Practice and Exercise*, in order to the same End, and so conclude all I have to say to you upon this occasion.

## XXXIX.

If therefore you would be truly Good and Religious, Holy in all manner of Conversation, and govern your Lives and Actions well, let it be your first and great Care to govern your *Thoughts*, to look to the Springs and Wheels of your Intel-  
tual

etual Frame ; and as the Wise Man advises, *To keep your Hearts with all Diligence*, to keep them Pure and Undeiled, since out of them are the Issues both of Life and Death: Which tho a certain and necessary Duty, as being one of those particular Improvements whereby the Christian has advanc'd the Jewish Law, I would not have you look upon so much as a New Commandment of it self, as a more easie Method and Expedient of performing all the rest.

## XL.

Further, Be advised in all that you do, to set your selves at the greatest distance from Evil, to abstain from all Appearances of it, and from all Beginnings and Approaches towards it. From all *Appearances* of it chiefly upon the account of others, and that you may avoid giving Scandal and Offence. From all *Beginnings* and Approaches towards it chiefly for your own sakes, as gaining a threefold Advantage by such a Distance, in that you will thereby enjoy a greater *Innocence*, greater *Ease*, and greater *Safety*. Greater Innocence, as being by this means intirely and wholly free from the Guilt of those Sins which you forbear; not so much as being within the first Degrees, or touching upon the edges and borders of them. Greater ease, because 'tis easier to abstain from the first Beginnings of Sin, than from a further Progress in it after you have once begun. As 'tis easier to prevent your first Motions down a Hill, than to stop your descent when once in motion. Nor is there so much difficulty in not admitting, as in ejecting a Temptation after 'tis once lodg'd, and has been kindly entertain'd. And lastly, by this Practice you will enjoy greater Safety, be-

cause greater Ease; there being not so much danger of yielding to what you can so easily forbear, as to that whose forbearance is more painful and unease. For the danger of chusing Sin, increases according to the greatness of the Evil which you avoid by chusing it; and he that would suffer four degrees of Pain rather than Sin, would yet perhaps rather Sin than suffer five degrees of Pain. For which reason, XLI.

I advise you a gain, to lessen as much as you can, the natural weight of your Concupiscence, by a *Privation of Pleasure*, and by a continual Denial and Mortification of your Senses and Passions. For the more you indulge your selves in the Enjoyment of Pleasure, the more you inflame your natural Thirst after it, and the more you make your selves Slaves to it. And the less you indulge it, and the more sparing and abstemious you are in it, the more cold and indifferent you will grow towards it. Your Desires will contract themselves for want of being gratified (as Men by much Fasting lose their Stomacks) and after many repeated Denials, will at length cease to crave, and so your natural Concupiscence will decrease and abate much of its weight. Which you find to be a thing of vast Advantage and Importance in order to a good Life. For by this means you will be the more fix'd and steddy in adhering to your Duty, as having the less Temptation to transgress it; and not only so but you will also make such degrees of God's Grace become Successful and Efficacious upon you, which otherwise would not be so, since a less measure of Grace will suffice, where there is less Concupiscence to resist it. For it is clear and certain, that the Efficacy of Divine Grace does ordinarily depend



pend upon the Disposition in which it finds us, in relation to sensible Good, as the action of a Weight in a Ballance does depend, as to its effect, upon the power and force of the Weight that is opposite. And let me tell you, that this is the only certain way that you have in your power, to render the Grace of God Prevalent and Effectual. For 'tis with the Will of Man as with a *Ballance*, both whose Scales are charg'd with their respective Weights; in which, if you would have this or that determinate Scale weigh down, there are but two possible ways of doing it, either by adding more weight to that which you would have predominant, or lessening the weight that is in the other. But now we cannot make the Grace of God Efficacious the first way, by adding more weight to that Scale of the Will, (for we have not the Grace of God in our power or disposal, so as to distribute what we please of it to our selves,) All therefore that we can do towards it, is only to lessen the Weight of Concupiscence that is in the other Scale, which indeed amounts to the same, as if more degrees of Grace were added; & by this means we may contribute to make the Grace of God Successful and Victorious. Which I take to be the true Reason and Usefulness of *Mortification* and *Self-denial*, which by Privation of sensible Pleasure, lessens the Desire or Concupiscence of it, and so serves to further the Prevalency and Efficacy of Grace: upon which is grounded that remarkable Counsel given by our Saviour ( the very same that I now give you, ) *He that will come after me, let him deny himself.*

## XLII.

To this Mortification of your Senses and Passi-



ons, Privation of sensible Pleasures, I would have you in the next place (as far as the Circumstances of your life will allow) to joyn *Retreat* and *Solitude*; to Converse as much with your selves, and as little with the World as you can. Were the World never so much better than we find it is, or can hope it will, this would be very *expedient* Counsel; but as it now is, it is plainly *necessary*. For the present Corruption of the World is such, that 'tis danger enough to live in it, tho a Man be not very intimate, or much Conversant with it. But as for those that are so, their Condition is extremely Hazardous; and they had need have a much greater Measure of Grace than other Men, to make it Secure. For if the *Friendship* of the World be (as *St. James* tells us) Enmity with God, sure even to have familiar *Commerce* and intimate Conversation with it, cannot but greatly endanger our Interest in his Love. The truth is, there is little to be got, and a great deal to be lost by being much abroad, and by using much the Conversation of Men; especially in publick Places, and promiscuous Companies. Their Hearts are generally Corrupt, and that makes their Discourse so; which even when most Civil and best govern'd, serves for little else, but to raise false Idea's in the Minds of the Hearers, to confirm them in their Prejudices, to renew upon them their ill Impressions; and to insinuate into them the Love of sensible Objects. The Language of the World is generally that of *Concupiscence*; which being the leading and governing Principle in Mens Hearts, becomes the Spring that gives Motion to their Tongues; and is the Seisin and Leven that mixes and diffuses it self with all their Communications; which therefore for

for the most part carry a poisonous Breath, a Spirit of Malignity with them; and at best, are impertinent and fallacious, full of illusion and deceit, misrepresenting, confounding, and transposing the Natures of things; putting Evil for Good, and Good for Evil; Darkneſs for Light, and Light for Darkneſs; and teaching Men to apprehend things either quite otherwise, or at least much greater or less than they really are; and so utterly deceiving them either in the Nature, or in the proportion of Things. But after all, the *Examples* of the World are by much, more Dangerous than its *Discoursings*; and good Manners are more corrupted by its ill *Presidents*, than by its ill *Communications*. For besides that, generally Mens way of living is less Conformable to Order and Reason than their Discourse, (it being more easie to talk well, than to act well) there is also this further difference, that their Example is a breathing and living Language, a Language that enters and perswades those to whom it is address'd, a Language that every body understands; and (such is the force of imitation) which very few find it in their power to resist. We can lend an Ear to what People talk, without being presently or very much disposed to Act it; but there is a sort of Sympathy in us that inclines us, even before we think of it, and as it were *Mechanically* to do what we see others do. And besides we think our selves in a manner obliged to do it, upon a mistaken Notion of Civility and Complaisance, and to avoid the unpardonable Offence of being singular, and of Condemning the general by our own private Conduct. And therefore, since upon both these Accounts, there is so much danger in Society, (I speak of *Common* Society; for I am

not conversing with a few well-chosen Friends;) and considering the malignity of popular Discourses and Examples, you can hardly Converse much in the World without partaking of its Spirit, and being seisd by its Infection, I would advise you to retire from it as much as conveniently you can; and declining all unnecessary Ingagements and Alliances, to betake your selves to the safe Harbour of Solitude and Retreat; where you may breathe a purer Air, live to God and your selves; attend with less Distraction upon the Grand Concern, and withall, Pray for those who are out abroad, & *passing the Waves of this troublesome World.*

## XLIII.

And that you may imploy your Solitude the better, I would have you retire much within your selves, as well as from the Noise and Tumult of the World: Converse much with your own Thoughts, (which when all is done, you will find to be the best and most instructive Company) observe narrowly the Movements of your Wills and Affections; examine your Lives, make frequent Reflections upon the State of your Souls, and endeavour to improve the Perfection both of your Intellectual and Moral Part, by meditating upon the best Subjects, and by reading the best Books. And those I call so, which favour most of the Life and Spirit of Religion; and are most apt to transfuse it into the Hearts and Minds of their Readers. As for *Plays* and *Romances*, I would have you wholly decline the use of them. For that's to defeat the Ends of your Retirement by bringing the World into your Closet. And for ought I know, you were better be abroad and publick in the World, than to have the World with you thus in private. Not that I think the reading

such

such Books absolutely unlawful; but only that there is a great deal of Danger and Corruption in them: And that as to the Wit, Language, and other Embellishments that they pretend to, and for which the Admirers of them recommend their Use, the same may be met with in better Books, which have all the *Beauty* and *Sweetness*, without the *Poison*. Nor would I have you bestow much time in reading Books of *Controversie*, and Disputes about Religion: 'Tis a thing of great Labour, and but little profit, there being not so much *Truth* gain'd by it as will compensate for the Loss of *Charity*. For that which the World is pleas'd to call *Controversie*, is generally little else than a *Litigious Wrangle*, proceeding upon Darkness and Obscurity, Fallacies and Equivocations, double Acceptation of Words, and Confusion of Ideas; from Mens mistaking and misstating the thing in Question; from mis-understanding of the Point, of themselves, and of one another. And while Men do so, they may dispute for ever, without knowing when they agree, or when they differ. Leave therefore these Wranglers to enjoy the Dust which they raise, and while they *Dispute*, do you learn to *Live*. Only *Philosophy* I would not have you neglect; but, if you have Education and Opportunity for it, to make a considerable part of your Study. For that will open and enlarge your Minds, give you true thorough Views and Ideas of things, bring you acquainted with your selves as well as with External Nature, and lay an excellent Ground and Foundation for Morality and Religion. But when I speak of *Philosophy*, I mean true *Philosophy*; not that which reigns in the Schools, (which after a great deal of Time and Pains spent in it, I think to be a mere Fantastick *Amusement*;  
made

made up of insignificant Terms, and a company of loose indeterminate Maxims, all built upon dark unintelligible Principles; and therefore to be as great a Corruption of the *Understanding*, as some of those things but now mention'd are of the *Will* and *Manners*) but the *Cartesian* and the *Experimental* Philosophy. But because the latter of these will require a greater Stock of Wealth and Temporal Estate, for the due Prosecution of it, than you are ever like to receive from me, I mention it only for order's sake, advising you chiefly to imploy what vacant Hours you have from things of an higher Importance, in the thorough Study and repeated Perusal of *Descartes* his Philosophy: Which notwithstanding the imputation of Atheism, which some are pleased to throw upon it (a Silly Charge, and such as nothing but their Ignorance of him can excuse) I take to be the only intelligible Frame of Natural Science that has yet appear'd in the World, and the only intire System that deserves the name of *Philosophy*. And tho perhaps every thing be not exactly true in it, yet I think there is nothing in it but what is *truly intelligible*; and withall, that there is so much of real Truth in it, as, if well pursued, will lead you into a great deal more; and such Truths too, as are of the greatest Importance in order to a well-principled Theory of Morality and Religion. But if you would have a general Instrument of Knowledge, an universal Key, a Book that will thoroughly regulate, order, and form your Understandings, and teach you how to use your Intellectual Powers for the avoiding of Error; and conduct you in the Search of Truth, (a Search almost as unsuccessful as that of *Happiness*) that will instruct you in the  
most

most Fundamental Theories, and prepare you for all that is further intelligible, that will purifie and refine your Minds, and brighten, clear up and enlarge your Thoughts; that will rid you of all your Prejudices and Sensible Prepossessions, give you clear and distinct Idea's of things, and furnish you with true and solid Principles of Science, and with the most necessary and important Conclusions. In fine, If you would have a Book that is alone a *Library*, and an ever-rising and flowing Spring of Knowledge, that ought never to be out of your Hands, but always to be read, studied, dwelt and fed upon till it be digested, made your own, and converted as it were into the very Substance of your Souls, let me recommend to you *M. Malebranche de la Recherche de la Verite*, a Book (tho for some considerable while extant) but little known, and whose worth is less understood, which the *falsly Learned* hate, because they cannot endure its *Light*, and yet of such excellent and universal Use, that 'tis great pity any Study should be without it, or any Person ignorant of it, that is capable of understanding it. For indeed, to speak out freely what I think (tho it be a more nice and hazardous thing to give Characters of Books than of Men) I take it to be upon all accounts one of the best Books that is in the World; and that of all Human Composures, there is none that does better serve the Interests of Truth, and of true Religion. I say *Religion*, for that ought to be the End of all, and thither I must again return, advising you to employ your Solitude and Retirement chiefly in the Religious and Devotional part, in prayer and Divine Meditations, and in reading the Holy Scriptures, and other good and profitable Books, and ever to remember,

member, that in the greatest Solitude you are not alone.

## XLIV.

But whether you be in Solitude or in Company, let this be your general Rule and Practice, *To study the Imitation of Christ*, to form your selves upon his Model, and to conform your inward Spirit, and your outward Conversation, to his Divine Example, who spent his Solitudes in Devotion, and his more publick Conferences in Works of Mercy and Charity, doing good both to the Bodies and to the Souls of Men. Jesus Christ is proposed to us as our great Pattern and Example, as well as Law-giver and Teacher; and he would not have been a compleat Teacher without it, his Example being one (and perhaps the most powerful) way whereby he teaches us. One great reason of our Saviour's leading such an excellent and exact Life was, that we might take a Copy of it, and use it as a Pattern and Model upon all Occasions; and it may be this is the only reason of its being recorded and transmitted to Posterity, that among the infinite ill examples we continually meet with in the World, we might have one standing and never-falling President, both for our Direction and our Encouragement in the ways of Holiness. And indeed 'tis the best Pattern we have, and the only one which we can intirely follow, and which alone will lead us to Heaven. Christ is a sure and safe Guide, and such as may be followe'd without Doubt or Danger, For so he himself tells us, that he is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, and that he that follows him walks not in Darkness; as indeed how should he, having the true Light of the World before him. Let me therefore conclude all my Spiritual Instructions



Instructions with this general Advice, To form to yourselves in the first place, from frequent reading of the Gospel, as true an Idea of the Spirit and Life of Christ, as possibly you can. And then to form your own Spirits and Lives upon this Divine Model, consulting this great Idea in all Accidents and Emergencies, having it always before you, and your Eye steddily fix'd upon it, that so you may draw as near the Life as may be, and may as far as the Condition of Human Infirmary will permit, be Followers of God as Dear Children. Consider him therefore in his Retirements, when conversing with God; and consider him in Company, when conversing with the World. Place him to your Eye in both Lights, and study to imitate his Devotion in the former, and his great Charity in the latter, that so joyning the Excellencies of his Active and Contemplative Life together, and endeavouring to transcribe his Obedience to both the Tables of the Law, you may compleat and fill up your measure of Righteousness, ever remembering that he is the *Best Christian*, not that knows most, or believes most, or that can talk most of Christianity, but, who is in the Heart and Life the nearest *Followers of Christ*

## XLV.

These (my Children) are the most Material and Fundamental Instances of Spiritual Counsel I have to bequeath to you, being the Results of my own Reason and Experience, which I advise you to consider and to follow, and if you find (as I hope you will) benefit by them, be the more diligent in the use and observation of them; and the more Thankful to God for his Grace, upon all your Endeavours begging his Blessing. To whose  
especial



especial Care and good Providence I commit you, beseeching him to bestow both upon you and me such a measure of his gracious Assistance, that we may all so live in his Fear, as to die in his Favour, and at last meet together in the Blessed Enjoyment of his Eternal Glory. *Amen.*

## POSTSCRIPT.

**T**Here are two Advices more that I should have commended to you, and which you shall now have in the same order as they occur to my Thoughts. One of them is by way of *Consideration* and the other is by way of *Practice*. That by way of Consideration is this, That you would consider that there can be no true Enjoyment of Life, till you are got above the Fear of Death, that alone being enough to strike a Damp into all your Pleasures and Enjoyments. And that the only thing that can put you above the Fear of Death, is a Good Life. And that therefore even upon this account there is an absolute Necessity of living well, that you may live with any tolerable Comfort or satisfaction, that you may enjoy your Lives while you have them. The other by way Practice is this, That you would have such a continual Watch and Guard upon your Thoughts and Actions, as never to tolerate your selves in such a State of Life as you would be afraid to Die in. Because, considering the uncertainty of Death, there is no assignable part of the time you live in, but what you may die in.

## A General Prayer.

**I** Adore thee, O thou infinitely Great and Good God, Maker and Lord of Heaven and Earth: Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive all Honour and Power; for thou hast Created all things, and for thy Pleasure they are and were Created.

Send down thy holy Spirit, O most merciful Father, upon me thy Servant; and so fill me with thy Heavenly Grace and Benediction, that I may become a Living Temple, sanctified and devoted to thy Honour and Service; and such wherein thou may'st delight to dwell, and make the place of thy rest and abode both now and for ever.

And to this end, grant me seriously to consider what thou art, what I myself am, and what I ought to be. That thou art a God greatly to be fear'd for thy Power and Justice, greatly to be loved for thy infinite Perfection and Goodness, and greatly to be praised for thy liberal Bounty and Loving-kindness. That thou art both the Author and the End of my Being, my true and only Good, the Cause of all my Joy and Happiness; and the great Centre and Stay of thy whole Creation.

Grant me also seriously to consider what I myself am, that I am a Creature; One that once was not, and is now a poor, empty, weak and imperfect Being. That I have nothing but what I receive from thee, that I can do nothing but what I do by thee, that I can know nothing but what I know in thee and in thy Light; and that in thee I have my Life, my Motion, my Being, my Happiness, and my all.

Grant

Grant me also seriously to consider, that I am not only thy Creature, but my Own; not only a Creature, but a sinful Creature; a Creature acting against the End of his Creation; against the Law of his Creator; against the Dignity of his Nature, and against his true and best Interest, both here and hereafter. That I have not loved thee as in strictness I ought; with my whole Heart, Soul, and Mind and Strength, nor as I might, according to the Measures of thy Grace, and my present Abilities; nor indeed as I have loved this World, and the Vanities of it, having been a lover of Pleasure more than a lover of God.

Grant me also lastly, thy Grace seriously to consider what I should be both towards Thee, my Neighbour, and my Self. That I ought to be Holy, Just, Charitable, and Temperate. That I ought not to live carelessly and at random, as those that have no Sense of thee, nor of their Duty, and that believe neither Heaven nor Hell; but as one that now lives in thy Presence, and must hereafter give thee an Account, and be Eternally Happy or Eternally Miserable, according as he demean himself in this short time of Trial. And that therefore denying all Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, I should live Godly, Righteously, and Soberly in this present World; looking for that blessed Hope, and the Glorious appearing of the Great God, and of our Saviour Jesus Christ. Fix O Lord, these Considerations in my Mind, and let them sink down so deep into my Heart, that they may bring forth in me the Fruits of good Living; that so my Spirit may be Pure and Right within me, my Life may be Holy, my Death Comfortable, my Resurrection Joyful, and my Eternal State Happy and Glorious with thee my God for ever. Amen.

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